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VIOLET LEE,

AND OTHER POEMS.

BY

MRS. S. L. OBERHOLTZER.

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TO
MY BELOVED BROTHER,
T. L. VICKERS,
PLAYMATE OF MY CHILDHOOD,
AND
STAUNCH FRIEND OF MY RIPER YEARS,

 affectionately dedicate

THIS VOLUME.

PREFACE.

As violets come with spring-time,
This rhythm came to me ;
Not strong, mayhap, or holy,
But as the sunshine, free.

My friends, for you I've gathered
This bunch of humble bloom,
Trusting it will o'er some life
Exhale a faint perfume.

I pray you take it kindly,
Nor think I deem it rare ;
Only a span of violets
Thrown on the passing air.

SARA LOUISA OBERHOLTZER.

CAMBRIA STATION, PA.



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VIOLET LEE.

FULL many winters' silvery light
Slept in Margery's tresses white,
And various herbs a sweet perfume
Breathed about her life and room :
About her life, because she gave
Counsel free to suffering save ;
About her room, because they hung
On the rafters, and fragrance flung
Into the crisp and crackling air
That mingled with the hearth-fire there.
Margery knitted, her heart at rest,
Knitting its ponderings into crest ;
Thinking while her old husband slept
In his arm-chair, and silence kept ;
Not but he kept it oft awake,
'Twas hers to give, and his to take,
The constant talk of good or ill
That comes one's daily cup to fill.

There, nestled in the valley green
That rests the hill and stream between,
Reposed the cottage, quaint and old ;
Sheltered in from heat and cold

By many ancient forest trees,
That break the storm and woo the breeze.
In this odd cottage dwell but three,
Of which the chief is Margery ;
But gleam of beauty womanly
Is the lovely Violet Lee.
Through the woodland, gloaming and deep,
Adown the rocky hillside steep,
In the meadow, the stream beside,
Everywhere that an herb could hide,
Roamed the maiden, the summer through,
Gathering and watching where they grew.

It was young Margery's delight
To gather and husband herbs aright ;
And now that age comes creeping on,
And her elastic tread has gone
Into a sombre heavy walk,
She spends her energy in talk,
Bidding Violet swiftly run
And bring the work of earth and sun :
“ For, child, you see my stock is low ;
Go where liverwort blossoms blow,
Before the summer sun's rich glow
Fades them ; purpling white, you know,
Are the flowers ; pluck stem and all !
Somebody 'll have a cough this fall ;
And they think I've power to cure
All the ills that flesh endure.

“ Generously plant the garden-seeds ;
And keep the herb-bed clear of weeds,

Preparing in the early spring
Separate border for everything.
The chamomile and sage, you know,
Have been sleeping under the snow ;
The old-man, and the tansy too,
Will brighten and put forth anew ;
The blue flag will be peeping up,
Its broadsword leaves the soil will cut.
Later, sweet marjoram and balm
Will waken in a perfumed calm.
Poppy-seed and cardinal-flower
Plant by thyme, beneath the bower !
Lady-slipper and marigold
May grow together as of old.
The angelica and comfrey,
The amethyst red, and anisé,
Put wheré last season's aconite,
Beautiful poison, drank the light.
The sunflower next elecampane,
And do not get confused again
When the great golden blossoms blow ;
They are not much alike, you know,
Because the 'campane's root is strong
And lives in earth the winter long ;
The sunflower in a perfect seed
Thoughtfully packs its yearly need,
Expanding to a broader tree
Than 'campane's rooted ages be.
Herbs are so different in their way
That peep without this ball of clay ;
And though they seem akin to be,
Their individuality

Is perfect and distinct as ours ;
Reared some for roots, for others flowers.
And sow the other seeds, my dear,
Just as you saw me do last year.”
So Margery directions gave,
And Violet, with spirit brave,
Flew to her bidding. The spring air
Ne’er fell on gardener more fair ;
Her brunette beauty, brightened by
The ruddier glow of earth and sky,
Smiled on the summer when it came,—
Smiled, as she listened to the dame
Recount the herbs of hill and glade,
Of meadow and of woodland shade,
That she must bring before the fall
Chilled and broke the heart of all.

“ Gather me,” quoth old Margery,
“ On the stream border, of balmony ;
The marsh-mallow is flowering pink
In the meadow to-day, I think.
Gather stalks with blossoms filled ;
Do not let the leaves get spilled.
Lily dig, and calamus-root ;
Watch yellow parilla-vines shoot ;
That we may know, when comes the time,
Around what slender shrubs they twine.
Benjie will help these roots to get,
For in the swamps ’tis ever wet ;
And the while he’s out, you know
(As at starting he oft is slow),

Have him dig of the red puccoon :
It blossomed white in May or June.
Then on the roadside as you go,
Pull up a dandelion or so ;
Carrot-root too, and parsnip wild ;
Golden seal, do you know it, child ?
Upon the hillside, in the shade,
I think you'll find the rootlets laid ;
Rough and rugged without are they,
Within, bright as a golden ray.
Bring the star-root from sandy loam,
And pluck, while there, of mullein's bloom.
Black cohosh and May-apple get
Many roots, and blackberry yet,—
And dig whatever else you see
Requisite to my rootery.
Then have old Benjie sit to rest ;
Perhaps aglow with earnest zest
He will forget how frail he be.
He's now from rheumatism free
(Thanks to the poke-root and puccoon !
They're slow, but sure old joints to tune),
And I would have him thus remain.
So you be thoughtful, lest again
You have the weary winter through
All of the outside chores to do.
He was in youth so staunch and strong,—
Ah me ! it is not very long
Since, standing at my father's gate,
I pouted at his coming late ;
He had walked of miles two score,
And said he'd walk as many more

If I would not upon him smile
And sit and chat with him awhile.
So we have chatted all these years,
Chatted away our hopes and fears ;
And Benjie's been as true a spouse
As ever God to earth allows.
But now he fails to hear full well
All of the news I would him tell ;
It may be age that's creeping on,—
Our life-boats have been rowed so long,
That they are by the waters worn,
And one by one the sails get torn ;
Until too weak to stem the tide,
A stronger hand that waits beside
Takes up the bruised and broken oar,
And rows the shattered boats ashore.
We see the harbor's open gate,
And only for the pilot wait.

“In all these years we've had some grief,
That could not always find relief
In tears, the natural, rightful way
For sorrows ebbing swift away ;
And in our hearts lie buried deep
The crop of joy we hoped to reap.
Mown some by the Reaper's hand
So early, little graves of sand
Tell only of the pattering feet,
That might have brightened this retreat.
But the sheaf we watched with care,
Deeming its fruitage perfect, rare,

Is garnered in we know not where ;
Only it is not sleeping there.
Ever will my grieved soul yearn
Towards my sheaf till its return.
'Twas roots, my dear, of which I spoke !
Somehow this latent memory woke,
And I have thus delayed you long,
Telling how Benjie is not strong."

The roots, collected with delight,
Within the cottage cheerily bright,
All sheltered from the dews of night,
Are strung along the wall so white
To dry ; their various odors flit
Down to the household, as they sit
Enjoying summer's ripening days.

Violet works in deep amaze
In the garden bloom : beauty breaks
Under her hand, and fragrance takes
Wings like birds, and is borne along
Like the sweet cadence of their song ;
Echoing in each nook and dell
Of the glad glory that they swell.
But Violet must broader go,
For the wild herbs are all ablow ;
She must, out from the garden bloom,
Pluck the elixir life perfume ;
For Margery, her friend so true,
All the mother she ever knew,
Speaks from the latticed porchway low :
" Violet, darling, will you go

To the orchard, and meadow green,
Down beside the rippling stream,
Plucking the blossoms ere they fall
To the ground and are wasted all?
Bring the water- and peppermint
From where the sunshine's yellow glint
Kisses the spray from off their lips
And warms their long-leaved finger-tips:
Binding them separately; for though
The sister herbs together grow,
They're not the same in gift or heart;
Label like twins to know apart.
And, maybe, 'gainst a rocky ledge,
There, close along the water's edge,
You'll chance to find the hoodwort now,
With its azure eyes and brow.
The wild hyssop, and boneset, too,
Are there as fine as ever grew!
It seems they've leased the meadow-land,
And taken quite too bold a stand;
With brier-scythe we'll send black Jake
Warning their trespassed lease to break:
Giving the elders a lesson good,
Not to impose because they could.
The brindle cow much thinner looks,
Since Benjie can't use brier-hooks.
Though I to culturing herbs incline,
I will not have them rob my kine,
Or hold an undisputed reign
While life's necessities be slain.

“Ragweed, plantain, and yellow docks,
Catnip, yarrow, the sweet wild phlox,
And the lobelia azure blown,
Have unto summer fullness grown.
We'll need them in our herbal store,
So pluck them, Violet, before
To the deep forest shades you go ;
Pluck, and bind them in bunches, so !

“From the woodland, another day,
Bring me St. John's wort, golden gay ;
And agrimony's lighter shade
Of yellow bloom is in the glade.
Gather it carefully, lest the burs
Prick your fingers, and life-blood stirs
Up to the surface with the pain.
Then get the sumac's scarlet stain,
And pennyroyal of odor deep.
The dittany's upon the steep ;
Amid the rocks there, too, may be
Some rare and precious barberry,
Wild chamomile and fennel sweet ;
And in some misty, damp retreat,
The tender fern, the maiden-hair,
You'll find in filmy beauty there.
Bring the wood-sorrel, too, my dear ;
Its leaves are heart-shaped, light and sheer,
Holding a tiny blossom white
Benignly up to catch the light :
It is the Irish shamrock, too !
And when on Western prairies new,

Its flowers are as violet blue,
Its leaves of deeper, greener hue.
Get colchicum and pipsissewa.
Solomon's seal of wisdom gray
Adorns the hillside by the way :
Pull while the berries purpling stay ;
The root contains its rich supplies,
And Solomon has sealed it wise.

“ Then, there are autumn berries yet,
That you can at your leisure get ;
The prickly- and the wafer-ash
Gleam ebony as midnight dash.
And out upon the laden air
There rests a pungent perfume rare.
And the spice-wood berries red,
Bruised and bottled, it is said,
Will greatly rheumatism ease ;
Gather them generously, please.
The brown seed of Jerusalem oak
I've often from the branches broke ;
And though I still have some in store,
I'd thank you, child, to bring me more.
The checkerberries wait the frost,
And with black alder oft are lost
Under a drift of fleecy snow ;
But as it melts, their beauty, lo !
Is peeping out with scarlet glow,
Like sparks of fire from bellows blow :
You, my dear, with your hands so wee,
May clasp these crimson gleams for me.

“And the bayberry on the hill,
I had almost forgotten, till
The thought of winter light and fire
Recalls the flame I most admire ;
Bayberry tallow-candle, rare,
Emits a ray so clear and fair,
And perfumes soft the evening air,
Casting a glow, and not a glare.
I never could live with lamp’s dull gloom
Breathing impurity into the room !
Bayberries now are waxing white,
And clinging to the branches tight ;
Bring me a wealth of them, my dear,
To make wax tallow for all the year.”

Violet much of autumn spent
Out with nature, deeply intent
On gathering all these useful things,
Plucking them, while she sweetly sings :

“ Chinkle a chink !
Chinkle a chink !
Bird of the streamlet,
Come and drink !

Let me bathe your downy brow
With dripping pearl, for I know how.

“ Chinkle a chink !
Chinkle a chink !
Why do you still
Retreating shrink ?

Let me smooth your feathers brown,
Fondly pat your tufted crown.

“ Chinkle a chink !
Chinkle a chink !
Take me into
Your life's sweet link ;
Let me be a bird like you,
Warbling all my lifetime through.

“ Chinkle a chink !
Chinkle a chink !
Lend me your wings,
And then I think
I could fly nearer the sky,
Touch the angels by-and-by.”

Wooing the birds, her soft, low trill
Sweetly the ambient air would fill ;
And to the snatches of her song
A spell-bound artist listened long.
Now she is humming a wild refrain,—
Hush ! and hear the words again :

“ Branded leaves are falling,
Maple fires appalling,
Weird thoughts recalling,
Burst through the trees.

“ Weary Dryads benighted,
Waxen tapers lighted,
And sadly affrighted,
At the chill breeze,

“ To their glen were rushing ;
Fear their motion flushing,
One wee flame went brushing
’Gainst maple-leaves.

“ Swift the fire around them
With its spirit bound them,
Scarlet, as we’ve found them :
The forest grieves !

“ And its leaves are falling,
To the maples calling,
Your weird fire enthralling
Blasted us all !

“ Forever it’s returning,
This red brand of burning,
And proudly its spurning
Break of its thrall.”

The artist listened, crept away
Into his heart that memory day ;
Then, with a nimble, well-schooled hand,
He sketched this little fairy wand.
She seemed to him a sylvan sprite,
Gathering and emitting light !
In vain he wondered what she did
With the berries her basket hid ;
Whether of them the fairies ate,
Or threw them ’gainst their golden gate,
An “open sesame,” and, standing, wait
The ponderous hinges’ backward grate.

Mythical visions on his brain
Came pattering thick as summer rain,
Of this beautiful Euphrosyne,
Who still, in her unconscious glee,
Is drifting music on the trees,
Lading with sibyl sound the breeze :

“Glenwater! Glenwater!
Sparkling and bright,
Tell if my lover
Is coming to-night!
Tell what he's thinking all the day through,
Whisper, Glenwater! I'm listening to you;
Softly you ripple, lucid and blue,
Tell, are his heart-beats as constant and true?

“Glenwater! Glenwater!
Sparkling and bright,
Tell if my lover
Is coming to-night!
Has he been tracing my name on the sand?
And lingered it fondly under his hand?
Or dashed you it out, thus breaking the band,
Bidding the dear letters die on the strand?

“Glenwater! Glenwater!
Sparkling and bright,
Tell if my lover
Is coming to-night!
Whisper his name and his station to me!
For life I've been threading so busily,

That I've forgotten what breathed the gypsy
Of the strong lover I'm waiting to see.

Glenwater ! Glenwater !

Sparkling and bright,

Tell if my lover

Is coming to-night !''

And she went home to see, maybe ;
Sheaves and basket half wearily,
Herbs and berries, Violet Lee
Bore to the cottage and Margery.

A STUDENT artist at Florence sat ;
His sunny hair, an heir-loom that
His mother had passed down to him,
Clustered soft, and the picture dim
Seemed by the contrast : his gray eyes
Intently watched the blending skies
That at his will would smile or frown
Upon the Scottish hamlet brown
That his own hands had builded there,—
And should the sky be dark or fair ?
He never could decide, I ween,
And so it lingered just between ;
The sun amid the clouds had crept,
And thus the little hamlet slept.
Proudly gazed the artist down
Upon his first created town ;

Not with a pride alone his own,
But of the joy 'twould bring his home.
And then he fell to musing, how
Dora would softly smooth his brow,
Kissing out the bands of care
That often now were resting there ;
How when his daily toil was done
Mother would kindly bless her son,
And father's heart would quicker beat
At the glad coming of his feet :—
Those feet should keep the rightful way,
And never wandering go astray.
Alas ! of hopes and empty air
Construct we many castles fair,
Doomed to destruction, swift and dire,
That like light fuel feed the fire
Of sorrow, swell the flame up higher,
Make more ashy deep the mire
That we must travel through to grasp
Again life's joys and sweet hope clasp.
And is it better thus to build
Dreamy castles never filled ?
Clasp a heart whose beat is stilled ?
Feel with joy our bosom thrilled
With the gleeful might have been ? See
Our fondest, brightest visions be
Dashed on the rock reality,
With no hope of eternity ?
Or to be passive, never know
The great, strong hopes that feel the throe,
The throb and misery of fire,
The grieving, and maybe the ire,

That comes to souls who think and wake
And into outward ripples break?
God, and not we, knows what should be
To fit for Him humanity.
There, standing in the open door,
The artist's bright contour before,
Was his unhappy, sorrowing sire,
Begrimed with travel, dust, and tire.
At sight of Randel's glowing face
He shrank, knowing the grief he'd trace
There when a few short words were said,
Tidings of their beloved, and dead.

“Why, father! what deep joy is this?
Embrace me, father, let us kiss!
We were divided by the sea,
And here you are thus close to me.
Why, what's amiss? you're pale as death!
Lie on this lounge and get your breath;
A glass of water, a draught of wine,
I'll get you in a moment's time.”

“Hold you, my boy! I came to tell
What makes our lives as dark as hell;
I crossed the ocean o'er again
To dole more softly out the pain
To you; balm oil I thought to pour,
But my own wound is still so sore,
That sight of you unnerves me, boy,
And I can put no sweet alloy
Into the cup of sorrow. Now,
Bluntly, rudely, I'll tell you how

Your mother and your sister died
A Minnesota stream beside.
Yes, it is true ! God comfort you
And me : our bonds to life are few !
I could not bear to write it, so
I'm here, my son, to break the blow.
How was it ? It was thus, my child :
The early winter seemed so mild,
That we prolonged our Western stay ;
Your mother had, you know, always
Desired to visit her staunch friend
Of early time, Matilda Glend.
They're living near St. James, and we,
Pleased with this opportunity,
Halted a few days on our route,
To see the Glends and look about ;
I would to God we had gone on,
And never set a foot upon
That Minnesota soil ! But no ;
We halted there ! No angel glow
Of warning came to light and show,
Or whisper us to onward go !
And so we tarried, all we three,
To visit the Glend family.

“ Into St. Paul one morning clear
I rode by rail, to see what cheer
And change increasing commerce brought
The capital ; and fondly thought
To hear the ‘ Laughing Water Falls,’
That Minnehaha’s lover calls ;

Calls through long centuries to be,
Calls, but it chills my memory.
Next day we were to leave, and I
Was hastening early back. The sky
All inky black the sun o'erran !
Fierce battle wind and storm began !
Just as we reached St. James it blew
Fearfully cold, and blinding grew.
Not daring I to stem the tide
Which none can brook, the time did glide
Direfully slow while fury passed.
Through all the bitter night 't did last,
Breathing destruction wide, and death,
Robbing mortal and beast of breath !
To God I prayed my kith and kin
Should never be such wild storm in.
Prayed ! who hears me when I pray ?
Perished my darlings on that day !

“ With morning, when the storm was still,
I started with a hearty will
To walk the intervening way,
And their anxieties allay,
Who would be grieved at my delay,
And frightened at the storm's affray.
I'd walked scarce half a mile, my boy,
When, to my unexpected joy,
I saw Glend's famous family sleigh
Upon the road in front that lay.
With quickening step I nearer pressed ;
The horses standing seemed to rest ;

The occupants I saw were three,
But they no welcome spoke to me.
The pompous driver sat erect,
Stretching the lines o'er horses flecked
Heavily with snow, and behind
Two ladies peacefully reclined ;
Coming to meet me, but so still,
They seemed cut by a sculptor's will.
A phantom, thought I ! but, oh, no !
I neared them,—God ! can this be so ?
I gasped, my own life ebbing fast,
Every light and hope outcast,
For, Randel, sitting frozen there—
Open the window, son, more air !
Oh, can I, need I, tell you on,
Of how I met them thus upon
God's open ground, beneath His sky ?
Rebellious that they thus should die
While resting on His very arm,
Which promises to shield from harm.
Coming to meet me, they met death !
Oh that the storm had drank my breath
Instead ! or beat out my weary life
Before this bitter grief and strife
Came into it ! Let us not go
Deeper into this fearful woe.
I bring my troubled life to you,
Its beats are growing short and few ;
I would they could have buried deep
From you this grief, and left you keep
Your gladness !"

E'en beneath the stroke
A fuller, broader manhood woke
Within the student artist ; though
Crushed by the great afflicting blow,
His bruised heart bent, he felt the glow
Of sympathizing love below,
Knew it must be his to succor ;
That he must be the child no more,
But the support and strength of sire,
Leading him up, God willing, higher,
From out this dreadful grief and night
Into some lingering ray of light.
Gently, caressingly, he spoke ;
A faint smile o'er the father broke,
Down to his sorrowing heart ; and
He daily grew to feel life's sand
More precious under the strong hand
Of the son ; the weakened life-band
Gathered strength, and its tension grew
Firmer with sympathy it drew.

Abandoned Randel his own aim,
His expectation fond of fame,
Ambition, easel, packed away ;
And the bright path that late did lay
Before him, faded swift to gray.
But not in sunshine's glowing ray
Our worthiest thoughts are always born ;
They oftener waken in a storm.
And if we feel the fall of rain,
We welcome back the light again

More fondly, that it fill our needs,
Swell into virtues little seeds
The raging storm-winds scattered wide
In nooks where sunshine cannot glide.
In giving one's self freely up
To distill comfort in the cup
Of a beloved one, the over-drops
Continually dripping, stops
In our own heart, so sweet and still
That life becomes a rippling rill
Of peace, outflowing through the soul,
And ever broader grows its roll
Towards eternity's ocean,
Till at last its limpid motion
Feels the great current growing strong,
And knows the distance is not long ;
We hear an echoing angel song,
And feel their breath in passing on.

Thus Randel felt the flowing stream
Through his whole being, as a gleam
Of reconciliation sweet
Hallowed the father ; and 'twas meet
That they should travel on ; for gold
Once garnered for the loves now cold
They spend lavishly, nor thought
It worth more than the ease it brought.

The winter had warmed into spring,
And the late summer birds did sing,
When our two wanderers bent their feet
Through nature everywhere replete

With radiant beauty on the wane,
To find the humble home again
That wrapt the father in his youth ;
Where parents taught him rigid truth,
And would have kept him from the world
In which his life had long unfurled.
A bitterness that now was not
He had felt earlier towards the spot ;
But as the glow of peace and love,
And Christ's baptism from above,
Fell on him, they washed out the gall,
And all the stain of Adam's fall ;
Guiding him now contritely back
Into his childhood's beaten track ;
Into his dear old parents' hearts,
Where swift anew the child-love starts.

It was on the same afternoon
That Violet Lee we've seen attune
In forest glade, with work and song,
That, borne by influence good and strong,
A stranger swung the cottage gate,
And found that God had left them wait ;
And left them wait so peacefully,
Old Benjie dear and Margery.
Their waning lives o'erflowed with joy
To clasp again their only boy ;
To feel his arms around them twine
Seemed perfect bliss, almost divine.
So long had been the thirty years
Since they had shed relentless tears,

And bade him, if he'd marry so,
Forever from their threshold go.
And now the love for which he'd flown
Had into a winged angel grown,
And ne'er could give the pardoning kiss,
Completing the old parents' bliss;
But she forgave them all, I know;
No bitter thoughts to heaven go.
Rude scandal's breath was most unjust
In striving her fair fame to rust,
And Margery knew long ago
That Hugo's wife was pure as snow.

Wide open was the cottage thrown,
They prayed their son no more to roam,
But bring his Randel to their home,
And leave them not to die alone.

Violet looked with new surprise
Into Margery's brightened eyes,
As, heeding not the wealth she bore,
Into her listening ear did pour
The story of her sheaf returned,
For which her heart and Benjie's burned;
Burned long, and into ashes white
She thought they would be with the night
So wearying long, but the day broke!
And with the light they gladly woke
To find the fire of mourning out,
And sunshine wrapping them about.

When dusk had held the daylight still,
Until the moon on wooded hill

Was casting shadows wild at will,
Our Randel, with a joyful thrill,
Crossed to the cottage on the glade,
Whither his fairy seemed to fade ;
E'en while clasped in greeting warm,
Reflected in his mind her form ;
And he was questioning if she be
A myth or a reality.

And later grandame Margery
Told them of her Violet Lee ;
The youthful gleam of beauty rare,
Whom God and chance had drifted there ;
What a great comfort she had been,
And how she came to enter in
So fully to their wants and ways,
Thus lighting up their shadowing days ;
Of how she flitted in and out,
Shedding gold brightness in her route.
Of flowers that smiled and herbs she brought,
Margery told, and never thought
Hugo or Randel might have seen
This lovely bit of sunshine gleam
Before. But the young artist knew,
He felt the sunshine drifting through
His life : the grand old cottage quaint
Seemed hallowed by this fairy saint.

Dwelled they now in other rooms
Save where we've been in herb perfumes,
And gathered knowledge, deeper, more
Than comes from herb or garden lore.

The winter with its fleece of snow
Falls on the cottage, soft and slow,
Caressingly it sleeps below,
Within its fondling fingers go
O'er Benjie's hair and Margery's.
And Hugo, at his patient ease,
Watches it clinging to the trees,
Fancying that in it he sees
The angel wings that for him wait,
A passport to the golden gate.
And Randel in the fall of snow
Sees everything in beauty blow ;
For on the downy winter air
He hears sweet Violet's song and prayer,
As unto the pure rhythmic swell
He hearkens, so we will as well :

“ Life's full completeness
Basks in the sweetness
Of love !
Though snow is coming,
Hear the fond humming
Of spring !

“ My heart overflowing
Feels the sweet glowing
Above.
Touched by God's finger,
Beauty will linger
And cling

“ Around we mortals,
Till heaven’s portals
Unswing,
And angels greeting
Question at meeting,
What bring ?

“ Randel replying,
Say underlying
Our way,
True love was tender,
Knew no surrender
Of faith.

“ Pure as the whiteness
Of the snow’s lightness,
I pray !
Our souls transparent,
Feel that inherent
He saith,

“ That never, never,
These souls dissever,
Or part,
But close together
Dwell they forever
In heart.”

THE CLOSE OF NOVEMBER.

NATURE'S heart is beating, beating, beating out the
autumn !

Winter's winds are blowing, snowing, sleeting out the
autumn !

Frost and snow and ice awaiting dawn of bleak De-
cember,

Wedded dreary winter month to the sweet November ;
All the Indian summer light has faded from her fea-
tures,

All the haze and purple daze that beautified her
creatures.

Ah, those hallowed, glorious days ! in my memory rest-
ing,

How they calm my aching soul against the current
breasting !

In the sunny long ago, 'twas later Indian summer,
We walked the dead brown leaves among, and heard
the brooklet murmur.

'Twas summer then ! Oh, sad, worn heart, still thy
restless beating !

Thy flowers are dead, and threadbare hopes not worth
the oft repeating !

He will not ! cannot ! come as then upon the brown
leaves crushing,

For Indian summer all is gone, and winter on us rush-
ing !

He cannot come, but I must go: take me up, kind
Heaven ;
For that fond tie that bound me here is riven ! riven !
riven !
Let my life beat out with autumn ! faded, tired, I seem
to be ;
Let me come, my heavenly Father ! nestling nearer him
and Thee.
Take me, God ! and *do* forgive me if I murmur at my
fate ;
Knock I at thy golden gate: tell me, Father, am I
late ?

CONTENT.

DEEP, silver-shining lake,
How much of thirst you slake !
Glad rivers, onward borne
Through pebbly channels worn,
How much you fresh the sea !
Sweet, peaceful, resting lea,
The rain and gladd'ning dew
Fills all your springs anew,
O'erflows the thirsty cups,
And every bright child sups
That on your bosom rests,
Is satisfied, and blest.

All nature seems akin,
And drinks God's comfort in

By long indulgence right,—
Ne'er brooding over blight ;
But like the river's roll,
Or progress of a soul,
Goes on, forever on ;
Rebuilding in its way
Each particle of clay ;
Pressing and moulding o'er
These bits of earthy shore,
Till human gladness swells
In bursting buds, and tells
That nature's perfect plan
Should stamp the heart of man.

Yet, how we longing grasp,
And murmuring, thirsting, ask
A blessing's level cup,
Then cry for it piled up !
An ocean might o'erflow,
And we unslaked still go
Dissatisfied, unless
We have content to bless.

PURE WATER.

PURE water, pure air, and pure thoughts,
Give to man strength and health ;
Doing this, they lead him up to
Comfort, thence to wealth.

Now, if all false thirsts were banished,
All the poisonous liquors spilled,
And we drink but clear cold water
From nature's springs distilled,

The air would lose its vileness
That comes from whisky's breath,
And many persecuted ones
Arise from living death.

The air, if it were possible
To be thus purified,
Would inculcate much whiter thoughts
Than now swell on its tide,

And we shake off this incubus,
This curse of olden time,
Live holier on pure air, pure thoughts,
Pure water, and no wine.

M A R C H.

MARCH with her thralls,
And wayward brawls,
The spring-time calls ;

Calls o'er the lawn
For break of dawn,
And summer fawn,

And tells the trees
In racking breeze,
To wake from ease ;

Whispers the roots
To send their shoots
In green surtouts,

Nor fear the blast
That cannot last,
But, marching fast,

Will soon outwear
The winter lair
That holds them there ;

Shrieks to the frost
Its reign is lost,
To count the cost,

And make repair
For wear and tear
By moistened air ;

Shouts from the hill
To rippling rill
Its breast to fill,

And roughly screams
To maddening streams
Its fickle dreams.

Now sobbing wild
O'er frozen child,
Its warmth beguiled

To leave the sleep
That snow-drift deep
Had bade it keep ;

A lullaby,
A prayerful cry
It may not die.

The bluebird flings
From beak and wings
The joy it brings.

A flush of May
Is here to-day,
But shrieks away

So fiercely weird,
The hope it reared
Is tempest-seared.

And wayward March,
All peace to parch,
Howls March ! March ! March !

THE SPRING - TIME.

OH, the Spring-time is the rose-time !
True, the Autumn has its light ;
But the Spring-time is the love-time,
Let us bask in it to-night.

While the evening shadows gather
Round their draperies of mist,
And great silver tears are welling
In the eyes so late sun-kissed.

The tall pine in royal fringes
Sings the drowsy breeze to sleep ;
While anear the weeping-willow,
Cradling bloom it may not keep,

Carpets all the earth with blossoms,
Honeyed tassel for the bee,
With its lithe arms still caressing
Them to rest upon the lea.

High and gaunt, two aged locusts,
Sentinels of the orchard wide,
Tower above our whole possessions ;
On the top like snow-drifts ride

Clouds of odor, tinged and creamy ;
Air that touches them is sweet,
And the flaky snow of locusts
Softly drifts about our feet.

Quilted with the emerald shredding,
And as soft as velvet all,
Is the lawn that was so callous,
Covered with a broidered shawl.

In the bridal robes of Spring-time,
Sweet within my memory now,
Is my darling, and the lilies
That I threaded for her brow.

Lower were the pine and willow,
And the orchard not in bear ;
Staid and stalwart were the locusts,
Crowded thick with bloom, and fair.

Humbler flowers that decked our border
Sweeter were than these to-day ;
And the lilies for my darling
Blossom in my heart for aye.

So I know the Spring is love-time ;
Though the Autumn has its light,
Still, the Spring-time is the glad time,
And I dwell in it to-night.

CLARENCE.

So fragile, that the mother's prayer,
Combined with lavish wealth and care,
Whom brothers eight rejoiced to share,
Could keep the breath no longer there.

So fragile, that as manhood woke,
His lifetime beat its last faint stroke ;
And ere love's hand could death revoke,
Unto his soul the morning broke.

So fragile ! the good Father knew
He could not see much trouble through,
And clasped him closer, as He drew
His precious life from out our view.

So fragile ! thoughts of love still cling
Around the angel on the wing ;
An untold wealth of joy 'twould bring
Could he awaken with the spring.

So fragile are the fairest flowers,
Their beauty breathes a few short hours.
So fragile are some pure life-powers,
They break away for Eden's bowers.

SNOW.

Snow ! snow ! snow !
With your crystals and feathers of white,
Snow ! snow ! snow !
With your drapery soft and light,
You fall so slow, and yet I know
You cover my graves with beautiful snow.

Snow ! snow ! snow !
Deep, deep in those graves we laid,
Snow ! snow ! snow !
Bright earthly flowers to fade ;
The dust below is sacred, so
Cover it gently, O beautiful snow.

FRANK MURIELL'S DREAM.

“ LAST night I dreamed ! The whole world seemed
Beautifully gleamed, thick-studded with stars ;
Old Time reposed, as I supposed,
And left unclosed the great golden bars.

“ The light flooded through, the sombre earth grew
All brilliantly new ; Death's sway was stayed !
The angels seemed to be close to the stars and me,
Sin did swiftly flee from the light and fade.

“ Like heaven, my dream dissolved the theme,
And the veil between was a filmy mist ;
I floated at will ; for as Time was still,
Of his wearying thrill I knew no tryst.

“ I crossed the bar that I found ajar,
And wandered far among the blest ;
And our Christ was there ! He smoothed my hair,
Till all age and care were lost in rest.

“ My love I clasped, and her pardon asked
For the years that passed in a dimmer sphere ;
So beautiful she, as she smiled on me,
In her angel glee, ‘ Glad welcome, my dear !’

“ My joy was complete, as the voices sweet
And the baby feet of our cherubs came ;
But my gladness spoke, the heaven was broke,
For I sadly woke unto earth again.

“ I was chill and old, so bitterly cold,
With no love to fold, and of joy no spark ;
The stars were shaded, the down bars faded,
The road not graded with gold, but dark.

“ Harsh poverty stinging round me is clinging,
And sorrow is bringing its load back again.”
Time beats her numbers, longer age slumbers,
No waking cumbers with chill and with pain.

Shroud we him lightly, angels more brightly
Clothe his soul rightly in vestments so fair ;
Flowers are awaking, tired souls uptaking
Dreams, and light breaking leaves gold on the air.

THE OLD HOUSE.

COME with me to my grandsire's house,
At the cross of the worn highway,
Modestly with its back to the road,
And its face to the orchard gay.
Though the early sunlight seems to go
Into it just as long ago,

It looks so lone, its length of white,
E'en in the floods of morning light ;
The loves are gone, the flowers are gone,
There's nothing left to make it bright.
'Twas crowded thick with luscious bloom,
Honeysuckle and rose perfume.

They grew so close that, passing in,
The blushing petals rained adown ;
And birds that set their castles there,
Twittered for fear their wilding town
Would lose its site upon the roof
And vanish 'mid the flower woof.

That rose-clad porchway! low and long,—
I never have seen such beauty wild,
Such lavishing wealth of blossoms piled
On any home, since I a child
Watched in dear grandfather's door
Their tears of fullness on the floor.

Beloved grandsire ! for thee they grew ;
Thy friendly garb, thy strong true heart,
Was shield and nurture for purity.
The smile grows sad, the tear-drops start,
Ever thy going out they mourn,
Bereft of beauty, clipt and shorn ;

They miss thy helpful hand, and we,
Who were so oft thy human flowers,
And ever twined anearer thee,
Miss too thy tender, steadfast powers,
The peaceful, quiet, waiting face,
That welcomed home the call of grace.

Thy work was bravely, nobly done ;
To my faint heart it seems so much,
The wife whom Heaven kindly gave thee,
So blighting early felt the touch
Of angels, and followed up to God,
Leaving thee instead a mound of sod,

And the nine darling babes she bore,
From the bright maiden to the tiny boy ;
Thee cradled all those little love-steps
On thy bosom, gave them the joy
Of having a parent true, proof
Thy faith in Christ was not aloof.

They blossomed out in tread of years,
Till only wilding roses stayed
About thy home of strong, deep love,
And children's children came and played

Where thy own babes were wont to be,
And clambered on the self-same knee.

The lights are out, a fathomless life
Has gone where a fathomless love may be
At a fathomless price. Thy angel there
Has a welcome of joy for thee,
Among the true, and among the tried,
In God's great house, His flowers beside.

THE DEAD CAMELLIA.

ONCE it was white as the driven snow,
These faded leaves had an emerald glow,
Lovely a flower as ever did blow
Was this white Camellia.

I shrank as it touched my finger-tips
And haunted me with its creamy lips,
For out of a life delusion slips
With this white Camellia.

My lover saw in my saddened eyes
No answering joy, no sweet surprise;
But—a wealth of sympathy underlies
My love for Camellias.

Heavy and brown with the dust of years,
Wrapt in the ashes of unshed tears,
Kept for a memory my heart reveres,
This dead white Camellia !

W H Y ?

WHY should it be chill
When we look for spring?
Why should the sweet rill
Of the summer sing ?

And why should we see
Of the dawning light,
When our life must be
At the drear midnight ?

Or why should we grasp
At a mythical star,
And think, as we clasp,
That we nearer are ?

Why should we ever
Be fleeing along,
And finding never
The chorus to song ?

Why should our hopes float
High on the wave,
When we know 'twas wrote,
Humility 'll save ?

And why should we fear
Death's opening door,
When glorious cheer
Is shadowed before?

Or why should we care
If the grave be low,
When Jesus was there
So long, long ago?

Why should we waive
To a little child
The faith so brave
On which He smiled?

We suffer of woe
Not a tithe to Him
Who paid with life's glow
The full price of sin.

EVENTIDE.

EVENING has wrapt in the daylight,
And the soft draperies of gray
Droop over ; while the golden bright
Of stars hushes the gloom away.
The breeze lulls out a grateful prayer,
The echo of the day in peace,
Its farewell to the pain and care,
Its lullaby of glad release.

On the porchway a pleasant group
Lapse into silence ; each one thinks
Out his own thoughts, and has his troop
Of fancies, which he links
Into the past, or future dim ;
Some woven chains stretch out so far,
Yon cloud with amber-tinted rim
As likely would scoop down a star,

As that the woof grow strong, and bear
The quickening pulse and life of day.
At nightfall, wings that angels wear
Waft nearer, touching our souls, ray
Us close to glory ; till the balm
Of slumber on her bosom lays
Us to repose, and all is calm,
Kissed by the dreams of silvery haze.

Within my heart there is a grave,
All heaped with ashes, white and still :
Beneath the sun a perfect pave,
A memory that obeys my will ;
But as the twilight wooes the stars,
Unbidden comes my worshiped face,
Nor time, nor shadow, ever mars
The loveliness in it I trace.

Oh, angel vision ! face too pure
For mortal touch, or daylight's glow,
Sleep in my soul, and nightly lure
My weary thoughts from all below ;

Sleep in immortal beauty ! years
Can leave no footprints on your brow.
The music of those tuneful spheres
Thrills on the silence even now.

The lull is over, and voices break
Into the hush ; the moon is out,
Covering graves and fancies ; take
The glory memories about
Our souls, and let the cadence fall
On other lives that seem less bright.
The strength of God encompass all,
And keep us through another night.

RAIN AT A COUNTRY STATION.

THREE days of ceaseless rain !
When will it clear again ?
Over this watery sheen
The gladd'ning sun be seen ?
Trees are heavy with rain ;
Leaves bowed down with pain ;
Flowers on earthy beds
Are drooping prayerful heads.
The chickens, dripping wet,
Are cawing their regret ;
Each brilliant scarlet crest
Bewails an empty breast ;

A feathery, restless shake
Longs for the sun to break.
The peafowl's gorgeous trail
Drags like a coat of mail,
The blue and green gilt hues
Wrapt in the three days' dews.
The men who bring their milk
To serve the city of silk,
Clad in armor of gum,
Subjects of martyrdom,
Look by their drowning cheeks
As if 't had rained for weeks.
Those who come to the store
Sit longer than before ;
Talk of the peeping oat,
And wish they had a boat
In which to plow for corn.
A creaking fish-man's horn
Sounds with a feeble warn ;
And pike on branch of thorn
Swing by the workmen's side,
As slowly home they stride.

Alas it ever should rain
Till flood becomes a bane !
Alas the dismal chill,
If light forget to thrill !
Alas, when hearts are sore,
If Christ smiles out no more !
If drizzling clouds between
Shut out the golden gleam !

The love of God I see
In the long rain on the lea :
The dripping sound is sweet
As tread of angel feet :
I know the hand of God
Sprinkles it on the sod ;
I know the sun behind
Is bright for all mankind.

BY THE SEA.

I sit by the sea, and it seems to me
The waves stay out so long ;
I sit by the sea, and I seem to see
Their crests grow firm and strong.

On the foaming white of the misty light
My lover seems to ride ;
And I think how lone in his billowy home
Upon the silver tide.

Then I look again, through my blinding pain ;
The ocean's full of wings !
So I hush my heart, and I hear a part
Of joy that Heaven brings.

OAK - LEAVES.*

OAK-LEAVES ! new, yet dripping the strength of ages ;
Leaves that garlanded long ago the Druid sages,
And inspired within the Celt a reverence tender,
As they watched the Druid 'mid your forest render
Unto the *Sul* and *Faran*, his and their Supreme,
The worship and the sacrifice : the scarlet stream

Of life-blood, that might cause more fragile leaves to
weep,
And drooping, fall upon the human offering, steep
And stanch with their own pitying force the cruel
wound,
Quenching with tears the crackling, flaming fagots
round.

Ah ! could you daily bind the Druid's callous brow,
Dear oak-leaves, and not upon his mystic brain print
how

The God he symbolized you for loved deeper peace,
And unto his wide populace breathed more release,
Than came by clipping sacred mistletoe with blade
Of gold, when moon had waxed six days in light ar-
rayed,

* The Celts, whose religion was Druidism, revered their priestly Druids. Their worship was held in dense forests, the Druid always crowned with oak-leaves; after cutting the sacred mistletoe, they offered sacrifice, sometimes human.

And that the deep inspiring gloom of forest shade
Was for a broader, tenderer, purer worship made ?

How you have walked with earth ! since first her bosom
throbbed

With coming life ; and her sin-stricken children sobbed
For lack of knowledge ; through the twilight corridor
dim.

Your shadow ever rests upon the land's broad rim,
Fresh in its strength, and green, or brown in slumbers
sheen ;

Your great, broad palm protective, is sky and earth
between.

Though we may not worship as the Celtic Druid did,
Choosing fadeless laurel for our emblem fair instead,
We symbolize you strong, and 'neath your spreading
boughs

Nightingales and robins trill out their happy vows.
We let you king the forest you have reigned so long,
Come to you in gladness, but with no weeping song.

WAITING.

I sit fondly weaving,
From shreds of your leaving,
A wreath of believing,
A castle of air ;

Your light words I treasure
Beyond their full measure,
Am culling at leisure
The false from the fair.

I often remember
The chilling November,
When dead was each ember
That glowed on the hearth ;
Your smile came and lighted
What else seemed benighted,
My faint heart delighted
Was wakened to mirth.

Your sunny eyes glowing
Were radiance sowing,
Before I was knowing,
In love in my heart.
Then fiercely by crushing
This new love and blushing,
That came with sweet gushing,
I bade it depart ;

Depart till I called it :
The life that enthralled it,
The eyes that installed it,
Beam over the seas.
Oh, why did you leave me ?
And why thus deceive me,
Thus sadden and grieve me ?
False Robert Chalese !

“ My darling ! my Mary !
My sweet little fairy,
So tearful and wary,
 Uncloud thy fair brow ! ”
Strong arms round me clasping
My pardon are asking ;
In love-light I’m basking ;
 No *false* Robert now.

THORNS.

A CRUEL thorn my heart has torn,—
A little wound, ’tis true ;
It soon will heal, but still reveal
 The scar not overgrew.

Why will we tear, for want of care,
Or counting of the cost,
The fondest love, the tenderest dove ?
 Oh, what a wealth is lost !

A wealth untold, worth all the gold
A Cræsus ever had ;
Worth all the strives, and all the lives,
 That make men glad or sad.

Then let us pause and think, because
These thorns are ugly things ;
Hard to endure, tedious to cure,
 The wound their piercing brings.

Watch with fond care, and zealous prayer,
A love we once have held,
Lest if it tear, the mending there
Leave an imperfect weld.

“SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN TO
COME UNTO ME,”

“OF such is the kingdom,”
The beautiful kingdom of God ;
Of untarnished spirits,
Whose bodies sleep under the sod.
These sweet little children,
These blossoms of Paradise fair,
Oft bud, not to blossom
In fragrance in this lower air.
In infinite mercy
The Father who loveth us all
Giveth and taketh our
Blessings: wonder we why His call
Comes for the tiny baby
Whom He gave but a few short days?
We grieve, but we love Thee,
Our Father, murmur not at Thy ways.

THE DAIRY-MAID.

THE graceful, blithesome dairy-maid
Pats and prints the butter ;
And o'er her face the light and shade
Betrays a heart a-flutter.

Her beauty has a ruddy cast ;
Amid the sun and clover,
The sickly pallor cannot last
That spreads the city over ;

But deeper growing 'neath the hands
Of nature, widely breathing,
We find, as stronger grow life's bands,
A deeper dye is wreathing

Upon the face, and glowing pink
As summer roses blushing,
Of country air and health the link,
And stamp of freedom gushing.

This ruddy, blooming dairy-maid
Moulds with her graceful fingers
The golden cheese and butter made,
While in her glad eyes lingers

A light the moon the night before
Had left within them shining ;
Her heart is conning o'er and o'er
The vow in it reclining.

Her dairy life is fading fast,
And turning Time's page over ;
Hot-house flowers of brilliant cast
Supply the place of clover ;

Around her fashion's votaries cling
With courtesied precision,
Comes all the ease that wealth can bring
To her delighted vision.

Oh, graceful, blithesome dairy-maid !
You're happier 'mid the butter,
Than reveling in a higher grade
Of weary fashion's flutter.

EARLY SUNLIGHT.

READ AT THE GROVE REUNION OF A. FETTERS AND HIS PUPILS,
AUGUST, 1872.

EARLY sunlight ! fresh and golden,
Beauties waken, lives embolden,
Dew-drops drinking off the flowers,
Nightfall's sombre gateway lifted,
Sunshine into shadow drifted,
Rousing, quickening nature's powers.

Early sunlight ! rich and glowing,
Summer sunlight ! radiance sowing,
It is a blessed boon to live !
T' see the wild exultant breathing,
See the beauty round us wreathing,
To note the glory God can give.

Birds that late were hushed to sleeping
Now in tuneful lays are steeping
All the radiant, ambient air ;
Fruit and blossom fragrance smiling,
Other buds to life beguiling,
Join the gala morning fair.

Forest-trees that rustle over
Softened turf, and grass and clover,

Shake their leaves and raise them higher ;
Shaking—dew and sunbeam scatter,
Causing humbler hearts to patter,
Lowly ones to feel life's fire.

Outspread fields so soft and mellow !
Corn that's sipped the golden yellow !
Cattle in the pasture lowing !
Stream in gurgling ripples flowing !
Everything that's living, growing,
Feels the early sunlight glowing.

We in frailty living, plodding,
Note the landmarks as we're trodding ;
Note the light, and drink the glory,
Marveling, wondering, longing, sighing
For the brightness round us lying,
Till the sunlight's dim and hoary ;

Or till we begrimed with sorrow,
Grasping for a bright to-morrow,
Forgetful of the joys that be,
Onward pushing, headlong rushing,
Brightest soul-flowers ruthless crushing,
Cross blindly to eternity.

We who've known a gladsome childhood,
Gleeful romped in glen and wildwood,
Bathed in streams and lain in snow-drifts,
Scaled at nut-time trees the highest,
Been to berry-bush the nighest,
Something know of early sun-rifts ;

Found we then the first strawberries
Of the season, and the cherries ;
 Plucked arbutus, pinkroot, violet ;
Roamed the wood for moss and lichen
To bedeck our playhouse kitchen ;
 Bruised the poke for ink of scarlet.

Something the school-way we traveled
Brings a memory oft unraveled ;
 Blossoming chestnuts, burring, falling,
Opening shellbarks, flow'rets drooping
Fain would halt our gleeful trooping,—
 Even crimson apples calling,

In the early morning blushing,
Strove to stay our merry rushing
 To the door of dear old "White School."
But we knew where sunshine waited,
Where the windows worn, ungrated,
 Gleamed it in or heat or cool.

In it gushed at that old doorway
Early sunlight, early away,
 O'er our teacher's desk was wreathing
Garlands, as the oak-leaves lifted
To the breeze the sunshine sifted
 On our tutor, round him seething.

And he smiled the sunlight early
To the heart of boy and girlie.

We, for coming compensated,
Caught the sunshine, knowledge gaining
'Neath his patience never waning,
Caught and kept, nor underrated.

Children filled with fault and folly,
Laughing mischief, live and jolly,
Little heads, brown, flaxen, curly,
Little hearts just waked to knowing
Youth finds shadows in the sowing,
Blessed you for the sunshine early.

We to-day, the child outgrowing,
Thank you for your early sowing ;
Thank you, as we're here together ;
We your pupils fondly render
Forth our reverence deep and tender,
Freighting all the August weather.

Could we, good for good returning,
Dash this sunlight radiant, burning,
Back to that true heart of yours,
Bright would be your life forever,
Joy and peace without dis sever,
Light that evermore endures.

W O M A N ' S S P H E R E .

AND is it woman's sphere, indeed !
To wash and stew, to cook and knead,
To ever hungry people feed,
To sow and gather garden-seed,
And never know a single need
Above a family's endless greed ?

Or, has she still another sphere ?
To walk the streets on mornings clear,
Arrayed in fashion's latest gear
Of heaviest weight or laces sheer,
Struggling through the livelong year
A Paris model to appear ?

Or, must she novel-reading sit ?
A brainless, worthless little chit,
Till through her addled vision flit
Such fancy pictures as are writ,
But never will in life emit
A solitary ray of wit ?

Oh, tell me, will you ? what can be
The sphere of women who we see
Laboring or frittering fearfully ?
Forgets she in her zest and glee
That her cramped soul will soon be free,
And feel its loss eternally ?

THE POTTER'S CHILDREN.

WE were all the potter's children,
And we worked among the clay ;
It was nine we should have numbered,
But two early sped away :
So the potter and his good wife
Had but seven, seven, seven.

We were sturdy, romping children,
Wide awake, or fast asleep ;
Gleeful rushing through our play-time,
Quick of hand, and fleet of feet ;
But the potter and his good wife
Patience had with seven, seven.

How we builded muddy castles,
Rows of marbles, dogs, and men,
Found them faulty when we dried them,
And our work to do again !
Smiled the potter and his good wife
At their clay-stained seven, seven.

Times have changed, and we are scattered
Far and wide in different homes ;
Each in new, unbroken households,
Drinking all the joy that comes :
Still we are the potter's children,
Still his seven, seven, seven.

And we cling in heart together,
Thinking of the years a-spel,
Of our romping, playing, planning,
And the humble prayers we said,
With the one that is in heaven,
We're still seven, seven, seven.

C H A R I T Y.

It is too rare a rarity,
This human, humane charity
That Christ enjoined.
Of it His blessed teaching,
By practice and by preaching
Is oft recoined,

Amalgamated, modified,
And rolled so thin that none beside
The working minter
Knows it is meant for charity ;
So great is the disparity,
Scarce a splinter

Of the pure, precious metal stays,
Enough to ring amid the haze
Of worldly woes,
To ring with mocking echoes,
But to bring no sweet repose,
No Christ-like glows

Of peace. Thin coinage passes here,
E'en with its meagreness so sheer
The light shines through ;
But when we are uplifted,
And all the chaff outsifted,
It scarce will do.

The tinkling sound that satisfies
Our faith to earth, and ratifies
Our truth to man,
I doubt if God has noted ;
But charity devoted
He'll surely scan.

And faith shall be rewarded,
Unto the true accorded ;
The promise bright
Of heaven and Christ's good will.
God grant us charity until
We coin aright !

LANDMARK THIRTY-THREE.

BELoved one of thirty-three !
Darling husband unto me !
Whither do the bright years flee,
Gliding on so cheerily ?

Ah ! it seems but yesterday
Since we joined our life and way ;
Life that's been a smiling May,
Love and light, and love always.

Could we into heaven glide
Through the golden gateway wide,
As our birthdays side by side,
Hand in hand o'er cross the tide,

Life would be complete, I think.
Now we're joyous on the brink ;
Each birthday a happy link,
Love to brighten every chink.

May our little household band
Be to thee life's golden sand ;
Long we journey hand in hand,
Ere our fragile life-barks strand !

MY BABY'S BIRTHDAY.

EYES of blue, bright years two,
Shine in you !
And their restful little light
Fills my soul with pure delight.

As you wake, ripples break,
Joy to take
From your satin lips the kiss
That is breaking into bliss.

Joy to hold, watch unfold,
Keep from cold,
This most dainty, perfect plan
God ordains to be a man.

When he clears all the years,
Smiles and tears,
Will he still our baby be
In the long eternity?

Bells of time, how you chime !
We resign
All our brightest joys to you,
Ring you so exact and true.

Babes of two, boyhood through,
Aged grew ;
And our babies are no more,
Here or on that other shore.

Mother's heart sets apart,
From the mart,
A sacred spot in her soul
For the babe while ages roll ;

And no time, with its chime,
Rain or shine,
Can through longest life outwear
The sweet baby footprints there.

Years may go, ebb and flow,
Still I know,
Though my babe to manhood grow,
That my soul embalms him, so,

As but two eyes of blue
 Violet dew,
And a merry little life
That I'd clasp away from strife ;

That I clasp, while I ask
 (Happy task !)
God to bless and care for him,
For our earthly lights are dim.

Christ to guide o'er the tide ;
 To abide
In his soul, and gently thrill
Word and action to His will.

THE DAWN OF THE CENTENNIAL.

THE dawn of peace is breaking ! breaking !
See the lights and hear the heralds of the century to be !
While the whole united people, with a bending heart
 and knee,
Crave the blessing of the Father, and thank Him that
 they are free.

The dawn of peace is breaking ! breaking !

The nation unto joy is waking !
Note the throbbings of its full heart as they daily
 stronger grow ;
Forgotten are the old discomforts, and the petty feuds
 I know

Vanish, as we group together of our proudest life-blood
flow.

The dawn of peace is breaking ! breaking !

The nation unto joy is waking !
A joy that will be pure, absorbing, untempered by the
grief
That comes with victories of war, and brings of sor-
row with relief.
A great outburst of gladness, a country's fully ripened
sheaf.

The dawn of peace is breaking ! breaking !

The nation unto joy is waking !
Its first hundred years are passing, and to celebrate its
birth
We extend free invitation all about the lovely earth,
That our friends in lavish numbers sit at our Centen-
nial hearth.

The dawn of peace is breaking ! breaking !

The dawn of peace is breaking ! breaking !
See the lights and hear the heralds of the century to
be !
While the whole united people, with a bending heart
and knee,
Crave a blessing of the Father, and thank Him that
they are free.

The dawn of peace is breaking ! breaking !

CAGING BIRDS.

I'm going to cage my birds this morn ;
While the sweet outside chirping thrills
All blooming nature, softly fills
The room through open window-sills ;
 A gushing drift of melody,
 An outburst from the cooing bills,
 A rejoice that the winter stills
 The cold, and patient waiting wills

Are free to rear and build love-nests.
The budding lilac hears the strain,
Forgetful of the brumal pain,
Its fragrance like a copious rain
 Fall thick from the clouds of purple.
 The emerald, waving, breathing grain,
 Takes to its heart the sweet refrain,
 And dances where it late has lain

In long oblivious slumber.
Unto the song strong trees do list,
Wooed by the warblers' plighted tryst,
T' promise the shining beaks that kissed
 Cover of leaves for nests they bring ;
 Cover of leaves from sun and mist,
 Cover and care for organist.
And blushing blossoms ope and wist,

Then drop that short-lived loveliness.
The madrigal of joy's unrest
The breeze wafts in, its drift to crest
Within the throbbing human breast ;
 And sympathy wafts out and in,
 Not unto mortals pinioned, lest
 His drowning care should fright the guest
 And drink the beauty alcahest.

And so I wish to cage my birds ;
My tiny bursts of rhythm bind,
This morn while nature is so kind ;
While bliss and fragrance close entwined
 Coax one's lax powers to energy,
 Intoxicate the sober mind,
 I'll smooth my flock, mayhap I'll find
 Few ruffled feathers, for I'm blind.

The sense of sight is all dissolved
In hearing, wrapt into the spring ;
And if the humble songs they sing
Be wretchedly distraught, I'll fling
 Them all unfettered to the wind,
 And pray the ambient air back bring
 Me peace, that it may fondly cling
 Mossing the empty cages, wing

My thoughts beyond the height of birds ;
Creep into my soul, and hide
With its soft palm the welling tide
That madly rocks from side to side ;

Still the wear that broads life's channel.
One needs assistance thus to guide
Their flock, the cage is open wide,
But weird free songsters, all untried

To cramping doors, refuse the way.
My friend, cluster of gifts and grace,
Comes to the rescue, sunny face
Devoid of clouds, enough to brace
All wavering nature into trust ;
She shares with me the wearying chase,
And tames the wildness of the race,
Refractory feathers smooths in place,

And fondles all to quietude.
I marvel at her perfect skill
In guiding creatures by her will,
And see my birds all bound and still,
While she departs heavy with thanks.
The music soft without doth thrill,
And bell of yellow daffodil
Rings peace into the bounding rill.

Silent my downy darlings lay,
Murdered, miserable bits of clay ;
Blind was I with the joy of May,
Mad with the sunny face so gay
Clasped in my wilding hope that day ;
I wept my birds and lost my way
Up to fame, for the lingering ray
Faded swift into twilight gray.

The musical light of life was out ;
My nightingale so blithe and free
Lies wingless, voiceless, on the lea ;
Red-breasted robin, stript of glee,
Is graceless of beak as a parrot.
My oriole's a chickadee,
Gold-dust sanded canary, see,
Can chant no more of jubilee,

It hears no echo of its name ;
They all are dead, my birds, and lost,
Lost to me, and bitter the cost
Seems to be, that my life was crossed
By my own impatient prayer
For earthly help. The ocean tossed
Into the land has never glossed
Too far the sand with silver 'bossed.

The amber-glowing stars of night
Have never failed to brightly shine,
Though clouds that garland o'er our clime
Oft veil them from us by their rime.
The pulse of nature beats in time,
Outbreathing through its form sublime
The throbbings of the heart divine
That fills the beauty of its chime.

Man beats to the same great measure,
And he who thinks his fate to sway,
To cage his birds some other way
Than patient labor day by day,

Because, forsooth, 'tis sunny May
And joy swells out her roundelay,
Loses his reckoning, and dismay
Checkers his life. Better to stay

Hyemal forever, than to wake
Unto the glad heart chords of Spring,
And, touching them too weirdly, bring
A burst of discord that will fling
Our hopes away beyond recall.
Better to let the sweet birds sing
Unbound in airy freedom, swing
To their own cadence as they wing.

THE REBOUND OF "ROCKY MOUNTAIN ECHOES."

I HEAR the echo faintly
Through the distant air,
They come to me sweet music,
For my beloved are there.
Trinkle they of mountains,
Trinkle they of springs,
Trinkle they of progress
Civilization brings.

I see the Rocky Mountains,
With Denver at their base ;
Watch the snow fall on them,
And sun shine in your face.

Lightly, whitely, falls it,
Down from angels' wings ;
Through the weary twelvemonth
To the summit clings.

Now I travel with you through
Monumental Park,
And climb up rocky ledges,
Or hide in shadows dark ;
Drinking in the glory,
Drinking in the strength,
That is offered freely
Along the Rocky length.

I tread the fertile valley
With beauty so replete ;
I weave an ivy garland
Around the mountain's feet ;
Worshipping the Father,
The great master-hand ;
He who wrought this grandeur
T' crown our Western land.

I hear the echoes faintly
Through the distant air ;
Echoes of God's glory
That is pictured there ;
Echo on, sweet music,
Echo back each prayer !
And gather our beloved
Forever in thy care.

THREADING FATE.

A LONELY woman, threading fate,
Murmuring mourns the spring is late,
And grieves that swelling buds must wait
Till stronger sunshine bids them prate
Of beauty,—threading fate so late.

Fair, frail woman ! I surely know
Your budding flowers will never blow ;
They're dead and buried under the snow,
Softly tableted years ago.
Far down, they cannot blow, I know.

Bury them down in your heart as deep,
Let them lovingly silence keep ;
Anon with balmy odors steep
Your memory, and let them sleep
In your soul, fragrance keep so deep.

It is folly to grieve and mourn
That after harvest-fields are shorn
That fairest grain is upward borne
And ruthlessly life's loves are torn.
He knows when lambs are shorn : why mourn ?

There's still a million flowers to bloom !
A million birds to wake with tune !
And angels to wash out the gloom ;
Dear lonely woman, give them room
Within your heart to bloom and tune.

CALL ME MY PET NAME.

CALL me Tattie, or call me Tat,
Call me by the pet name that
My sister did her childhood through,
Ere she to an angel grew,
And let me feel the happy thrill
Of her presence with me still.

Call me Tat, angel !

Call me Tat, dear !

Ever so faintly,

And I will hear.

Sweetly, after the prayers were said,
Slept we on our downy bed ;
And, gathered in my close embrace,
With her kisses on my face,
Wove I visions of golden thread
For the baby's heart and head.

Call me 'Tat, angel !

Call me Tat, dear !

Ever so faintly,

And I will hear.

Half-score years she slept and woke,
Then the brittle life-chord broke ;
Suddenly it snapped in twain,
Leaving us but grief and pain,—

But a memory, oh, so sweet !
Echoes from her passing feet.
 Call me Tat, angel !
 Call me Tat, dear !
 Ever so faintly,
 And I will hear.

Call me Tattie, or call me Tat,
Sitting where we oft have sat,
In the doorway cheery and low,
Watching shadows come and go,
Wee fond arms around me twine,
And I dream that they are thine.
 Call me Tat, angel !
 Call me Tat, dear !
 Ever so faintly,
 And I will hear.

AUNT MARY.

THERE is silence in thy household,
 There is silence on thy hearth,
Vanished is thy youthful romance,
 Into memory stored thy mirth.

Now the moon is in its fullness,
 And its bright light, on me falling,
Kisses, fondles thee the same ;
 And I seem to hear thee calling

Through the distance, far away ;
So I come to thee in feeling,
Come in spirit, still thy only
Little girl before thee kneeling.

Stroke the hair back from my temples ;
Comfort me and thee as well ;
Let us twenty years turn backward,
On the brightness let us dwell.

Sunlight, moonlight of my childhood
Broader beamed beneath thy smile,
And how many happy hours
Did thy kindly voice beguile !

Deep within my memory-garden
Still are wee flowers growing there,
That thou plantedst, my Aunt Mary,
With thy gentle love and care.

So from out my widening life-work
Come I sometimes back to thee,
Thinking I've so much to woo me,
And how lonely thou must be.

Lonely ! lonely ! art thou lonely
As age clambers up to thee ?
Or does life seem gliding nearer
Unto our good Saviour's knee ?

That He'll take and soothe thy troubles,
Righting all the wrongs of earth,—
Sends He angels now to guard thee,
Seeing, knowing all thy worth.

BUTTERCUPS.

“CUP of golden,
I'm beholden ;
Pray of fortune tell to me :
Will I healthy
Be, and wealthy?
Or obscure in poverty?
Will a lover
Round me hover
When my beauty's on the wing?
Bee the clover
Watches over
Fondest ever in the spring.
Will I older
Grow, and colder
Be the beatings of my heart?
Fresh unfolden
Cup of golden,
Whispering my fate impart.”

Quoth the flower :
“I've no power
But in poesy to speak.
Hold me under,
And you wonder
That I gild your chin and cheek.
Questioning beauty !
Love is duty,

And you fortune's mirror are ;
 Be reflecting
 As expecting,
 And your life's a golden bar.
 In the spring-time,
 In the snow-time,
 Buttercups are rooted strong ;
 In the flower-time,
 In the rain-time,
 Smile the fragrance of your song."

THE OLD WELL-CURB.

'Twas old and rotted, a dangerous thing,
 Unfit to cover the pure well spring ;
 The boards were patched, and the boards were loose,
 Unsound and unsafe for daily use ;
 The dainty foot of the wee housewife
 Noted the trembling, and feared the life
 Of her little ones,
 Her darling sons.

She spoke to her husband soft and low
 Of peril in going to and fro
 O'er the open grave, that seemed to grow
 Wider, as worn boards bent so low :
 The husband smiled at her fancies weird,
 And saw no shadow in what she feared ;
 He smiled and kissed
 In truthful tryst,

But the old well-curb remained the same ;
And the wife again, when summer came,
Repeatedly warned, but still in vain.
The well lapped in the sun and rain.
Sweet for the woman !—sweet for the well !
Had it been content with rain that fell,
Nor wanted of more
Than sky could pour.

Her darling boys, in their romping play,
Forgot that the curb was weak and gray.
A shriek, of “ Mamma ! ” was all she heard.
The woman sprang in without a word,
Into the well so clear and bright,
To bring her babies back to light :
She clasped them there
With hasty prayer,

And held them close in her longing arms,
Against her bosom away from harms ;
The weight was great, for the souls had fled,
And the wee wife had her children—dead !
Of hopeless agony none can tell,
Felt by the mother within the well.
Then the angels there
With loving care

Bore her to the babes, where the waters wide
Drink in no life on their silver tide.
But the gap is here, it's yawning still,
A gap that the earth can never fill,

In life of him, who the curb below
Found his darlings, and found his woe,
 'Neath the crystal flow,
 So long ago.

LITTLE SAND - BARS.

FULL of sand-bars is life's ocean ;
And he who clear of all would steer
Must be a careful engineer.

Daily, hourly, we're in danger
Of going adrift, against a rift,
That we see when the waters lift.

Little troubles, little sand-bars
Under the wave, to try the brave,
And teach us not in vain God gave

To souls a patient energy.
Avoid the bars ! look to your spars !
That naught your true direction mars.

Bring your ship safe to the harbor !
The voyage o'er, safe to the shore !
Where troubles, sand-bars, are no more.

HOME FOR THANKSGIVING.

“COME home for Thanksgiving, children !
Gather around the hearth ;
The golden haze of autumn days
Softly plays, and lingering stays,
Enhancing all the glories
Thanksgivings bring to earth.

“Come home in the early morning !
As the Indian summer light
Its halo lifts, and sunshine drifts
With gentle breeze on barren trees,
Gather it on the wayside,
Ye children, young and bright !”

“We’ll come for Thanksgiving, mother !
Into the heart of our home,
And clustered there away from care,
We’ll dream of life with beauty rife,
Backward gliding through the years
When we were all at home.

“This morning was frosty, mother,
The grass lay crackling and white ;
The flowers are brown from autumn’s frown,
And yet we gaze through the purple haze,
Remembering the beauties a-spied,
Hugging their memories bright.

“’Tis better on Thanksgiving-day
To rock our griefs to sleep ;
And, oh, I would we only could
Feel for one day that happy way
We did two years ago !
But the sorrow’s down so deep,

“Deep, deep as the life itself !
But this is Thanksgiving-day !
And we in praise our voices raise
To God above, who in His love
Gives blessings manifold
And points to heaven the way.

“He’ll not forsake us, mother !
Though the autumn frosts and rain
Heavily fall as a funeral pall ;
There’s a light quenchless bright,
There’s a balm in the calm,
That will bring us relief.

“Let us thank God for *thee*, mother !
For knowledge grief cannot dim !
The land of life beyond this strife,
Our angels there, a constant prayer,
That beautiful cherub link
That binds our souls to Him.”

FLOWERS FROM OUR GRAVES.

FLOWERS from the graves of our loved ones !

Flowers, dripping with perfume and dew !
Alyssums, geraniums, verbenas,
And sage of a bright scarlet hue,
Together so gracefully mingled
With tenderest reverence and care.
'Twas mother plucked and arranged them !
'Twas mother who planted them there !

I love to kiss and caress them,
These fragile young blossoms so fair ;
They seem to attract my beloved ones
From the beautiful "*Over There.*"
Yet there's a thrill passes through me,
A shiver that quenches my life,
As I think how bitter the struggle
Of parting, with agony rife.

Why should these thoughts come to haunt me,
Of things that ought not to have been ?
Why should my nature rebel so,
When God takes His own back to Him ?
Forgive me ! these flowers whisper comfort,
Their soft voices fall on my heart ;
They tell me, in musical numbers,
He loves us ! He calls us apart !

OVER THERE.

Just beyond the limpid waters
Of time's silver, rippling stream,
There's a realm of radiant beauty,
Beautiful beyond a dream,
Where no snows of age are falling
Sadly with their weight of care,
And no rains of heavy sorrow
Hide the sunshine over there.

We amid our earthly plodding
Strive for worldly fame and gain,
Grasping for the gold and glitter,
For the gladness, and the pain,
Till the thorns of life they wound us,
Folded 'mid the roses fair,
And aggrieved we cast them from us,
Longing for the over there.

While on this side of the river,
On the side that we call life,
We see every grade of mankind,
From our stand-point view his strife,
See him like a fragile flower
Wither in the evening air,
Watch his soul float o'er the waters
To the haven over there.

Little children, pure and holy,
Wander here a few brief days,
To beguile us with their smiling
Rosebud lips and angel ways;
Then they flee, for Jesus calls them :
Ere they know each worldly snare,
They are folded to His bosom,
'Mid the brightness over there."

Youth and maiden, fair and fragile,
Bud and blossom to decay ;
Nothing that's gilded o'er of earth
Can lingering shine for aye.
Hope and beauty rear their castles
Bright with ethereal air,
Castles doorless, till the morning
Beameth on us over there.

Time, God's good and faithful watchman,
Is ever the same on his beat,
Crumbling castles, binding together
For us the bitter and sweet ;
Guiding us on to the river,
And bidding us to beware,
Lest we, stumbling, fall, and cannot
Reach the good land over there.

Hearken to his kindly warnings,
Given with a voice so free,
As he lifts the book of ages
To its place upon his knee :

“ Ah ! spring, summer, autumn, winter,”
He turns the leaves with care,
And gathers the passengers in
His boat, bound for over there.

He gathers them in so fondly,
And steers with untiring hand ;
He dips his oar in the twilight,
And shakes off the golden sand.
His freight has passed the rapids ;
Childhood, youth, and silvered hair
Glide over the peaceful waters,
To the harbor over there.

Time hovers around our footsteps,
Shedding a shadow and gleam,
Giving a love, or a sorrow,
To hasten on life's dream :
He tells us in rain, in sunshine,
In nature everywhere,
In showering blossoms, or snow-flakes,
Of the beautiful over there.

Thither we hope we are going :
The days, like visions of light,
Come robed in wealths of fancy,
Which flee with the sombre night,
Bearing us on to the river,
On—as we breathe a prayer
That God, our Father and Giver,
Will welcome us Over there.

AT THE OLD MILL.

RADIANT day is slowly fading,
And the evening calm and still,
Gazing through the oak and willow,
Stoops to kiss the ancient mill.

Listen to the *damsel* dancing
To the jig of feed and flour,
And the water-wheel revolving
With a dashing, constant power.

There is music in the rattle
Of the tinkling wheat that falls
In the hopper, as the miller
Stops to heed the gristmen's calls.

Yes, I love this shaded building,
Love the flowing stream and flowers,
Love to hear the busy clatter
On the lingering summer hours.

More than all, I love the miller,
For his sake I love the rest ;
Of this world and its enchantments
I adore him as the best.

Of these twilights I would weary
If his voice came not to cheer,
And this mill-life would grow dreary
If my darling was not here.

THE SEWING - MACHINE.

I'LL just put a ruffle
These bunch tucks between,
For I think it a pleasure
With sewing-machine.

A puff for a heading
Will not come amiss,
A wee double ruffle
As crowning to this.

The clothes of my children
I'll have all complete,
With tucking and braiding
Exquisitely neat.

The slips of my pillows,
The top of each sheet,
With snowflaking ruffles
The sleeper shall greet.

As swan's downy feathers,
So fleecy and fair,
Shall be the soft cambric
Of wrappers I wear.

Elaborate their trimming
Of hamburg and puff,
I'm sure that the laundress
Disdains them enough.

Each good becomes evil
When run to extreme :
The laundress thinks thus of
The sewing-machine,

As, wearily pressing
Each ruffle and seam,
She blesses all else but
The "murthering machine."

BROKEN REST.

It was midnight in the winter !
I had been slumbering deep,
Wakened by a horseman calling
As he galloped down the steep.

"Something dreadful, husband, happened ;
Come, my darling, do arouse !"
"Ah ! the wind is blowing bitter,"
Then essayed my sleepy spouse.

"Now the horse is coming nearer,
With a fearful hurried tread !
Our good neighbors or our people
Must be dying, or are dead !

“It is passing, you are saying ;
But it turns—is back again :
The messenger is tender-hearted,
Really dreads to give us pain.”

Now aroused, my lord, descending,
Goes without to face the blow :
In again he is so quickly,
’Tis a dreadful thing, I know.

Fearful, tearful, sit I waiting,
Up the steps I hear him groan,
As I hold my breath and whisper,
“I can bear it, precious one !”

Choked with anger or emotion,
Comes the answer, solemn, deep,
“It’s a darkey on a donkey,
Galloping after sheep.”

THE SELF-SAME DUST.

PINKS don’t grow on a blackberry-bush,
Or beets on a poplar-tree,
No bow-apples grow where chestnuts are,
Or where the shellbarks be.

Daisies don’t peep from the cedar’s top,
They never climbed so high ;
The lowly chick-weed never touched
The golden head of rye.

We may theorize, and build our bridge
Of plans the river o'er,
We cannot coax the cranberry-vine
Up higher than before.

They're certainly made of the self-same dust,
And by the self-same hand,
But pines won't thrive on the water's edge,
Or spring-cress on dry land.

The velvet grass in a hundred years
Could not bloom out a rose,
Though the wilding-bush into its lap
A million petals throws.

But the feathery blossoms of the grass
That cluster round our feet,
More needful are to a perfect lawn
Than blushing roses sweet.

We may bright our allotted dust, while
We cannot change its sphere ;
We may lift its rightful budding up
Into the golden clear.

LINES

TO MY BROTHER ON HIS MARRIAGE.

FROM out the distant prairie
Thou plucked'st a blossom sweet,
And brought'st it with thanksgiving
To make thy life complete.

Thy heart's a royal garden,
Where it will ever bloom ;
A garden full of sunshine,
Without a shade of gloom.

I speak as though I knew it,
For, brother, I've been there,
Since the angels fenced it
To thee a baby fair ;

I've had a little corner
Through all these growing years ;
And know there's none more fertile
Within this vale of tears ;

Know the flower will flourish
And shed its rich perfume,
Making life a gala day,
Perpetual early June.

We enjoy the garden bloom,
And take our rightful share,
According to the blossom sweet
A heartfelt, welcome prayer.

God bless wee prairie flower !
And keep it ever bright,
Shedding a halo round thy life,
An everlasting light.

When the earth is fading out,
And all its lights are dim,
Mayst thou bear triumphantly
Thy flower up to Him !

R U M !

O RUM! Rum! Rum!
With dirge-like drum!
With wiles of gain
In light champagne,
You hold in thrall,
Embittering all
These days of light
With fearful blight.

Your direful reign !
Your life-blood stain !
Foretastes the hell
Your votaries swell
Before they go
To realms below.

Could we have strength,
And time have length,
To cleanse from black
Your trailing track,
If you were hurled
Beneath the world,
'Twould ages take
The spell to break:
Marred wealth and fame!
The gifted brain!
It makes one weep
That you should steep
With stain and brand
The powerful hand
Of genius.

Rum !

Is your work done?
Your sulphurous work?
Do you not shirk
And trembling fall,
Reviewing all
The myriad ills
Your blackness fills
Into white hearts,
Whence joy departs?

Your work is dire!
And Satan's fire
Did shame devour;
But you shall cower
Before the pure.
Your death is sure!

For God is true,
And will undo
These binding chains,
These galling pains.

The innocent,
Whose souls are rent
With misery,
Feel most, and see
The price of sin.
We must begin
With stronger might
The temperance fight,
With prayerful aid
Your stain to fade
From off mankind.

From dross refined,
Our nation's soul
Will beat and roll
Your funeral drum,
False Rum! false Rum!

OUR PEARLS.

ON what do we string our pearls,
Our precious, glittering pearls?
On threads of silver and gold?
On steel so icy cold?

On a bright silken cord
That binds with sweet accord
And clasps our throat around,
Making us softly bound,
Clasped and yet left free
On the tidal waves of glee?

Where do we gather our pearls,
Our light and glittering pearls?
In our toilsome daily life?
From out the world's broad strife?
From our beloved and tried,
Where never a doubt implied
Can dim the crystal flow
Of water with pearls below?
Or on that blissful shore
Whence the tide comes in no more?

How do we gather our pearls,
Our pure, heart-treasured pearls?
With patience that knows no mate
Do we watch the golden gate,
Lest, if we idly prate,
They're gathered, and we are late?
Do we treasure each tiny one,
Wishing our work was done?
Or cheerily fill the string
With life an endless spring?

When do we gather our pearls,
Our thread of glittering pearls?
In childhood's happy day,
When sunshine's on the way?

When buds burst into bloom,
And life is all perfume,
A brilliant draught of June?
Or at the radiant noon?
Before the sun shall wane
And set on age and pain,

Let us be gathering pearls,
And threading while life unfurls;
Gathering from under the wave
Where the tidal waters lave,
When the tide is out or in,
Shaking them out from sin;
Threading them in our soul
Fast for eternity's roll;
A chaplet it may wear
Up, up from earth and care.

THE MAY BURIAL.

EARTH, take her tenderly unto your breast!
Angels, sweet minstrels, hushed her to rest;
Hushed, in the midst of love's labors and zest,
Beats of a heart that was truest and best.

Stilled unto us is her harp and her lyre,
Gone to trill soul-music higher, up higher;
Out of the reach of the wearisome tire
Circling around us ere fades out life's fire.

Lay her form tenderly on the May's heart,
A flower of the flowers, the pure lily part ;
God keep the blossoms who mourn her depart,—
Keep them, and shield them amid the world's mart,

Till at last, gathering all the sweet bloom
In reunion above the May tomb,
Angels so tenderly kiss off the gloom,
Clasp them together in Love's glory room.

DREAMING.

DREAMING while the rain-drops
Quiver on each spray ;
Dreaming as the twilight
Clasps the fading day ;
Dreaming while the lilac
Droops its purple head
To caress the violets
That slumber on its bed.

Dreaming while all nature
Bathed in tear-drops lay ;
Dreaming of the sunshine,
Golden child of May ;
Dreaming that the morrow 'll
Bring a wealth of bliss,
While a wreath of blossoms
Is crowded into this.

Dreaming of the future,
While the present lies,
Like an unread volume,
Opening to the skies.
Dreaming, dreaming, dreaming,
Surely dreams are vain,
Else why sit so listless
And dream them o'er again?

"CHANGING IN THE NECK."

Not a spring since I remember
But the heralds old have said
The moon in the neck was changing,
And the fruitage would be dead!

Shook their heads at all our visions
Of the fullness that would come,
Till I've learned to 'joy the blossoms
And to let the fruit alone.

What's the use to be expecting
Moons to change in the neck,
And be ever looking forward
To trouble by the peck?

What's the use to be consulting
For aye the almanac,
When we might be methods planning
To keep the trouble back?

What's the use by daily croaking
To paint life's picture dark,
And in every little rain-storm
To think we need an ark?

What's the use to waste our prayers
In craving what is not,
While they might be spend'd wisely
In thanks for good we've got?

SEALED BOOKS.

NEATLY bound, securely sealed,
Their contents ne'er to be revealed,
Alas, how little some contain !
Of wisdom scarce a slight refrain :
Life-books that are sealed the tightest
Are sometimes in weight the lightest ;
And we curious ones that wonder
What's the pompous covers under,
What sweet history marks their pages
And lies silent through the ages,
Would be sadly disappointed,
Have our dream-clad forms disjointed,
If the lock that's grown time-rusted
Now would turn, and leaves all dusted
From the mouldy webs and mosses
Breathe to us their list of losses ;
All the mystery that enshrouds them,
All the fame with which we crowd them,

Into empty air would vanish,
Every beauteous vision banish,
And we fain would seal them tightly,
Lest the pages blank, unsightly,
Chase the rainbow light and glory
From some mind that worshiped story.

Ye who empty volumes carry,
Keep them sealed, and never tarry
For the searching eyes to open
Musty leaves : wisdom unspoken
Is by gilded bindings breathed,
Ignorance best by silence sheathed.
And though this plan deceitful be,
It still is happiest policy :
Our brains unto mysterious people
Ever rear a vine-clad steeple ;
Thus to books of choicest binding
We accord the worthiest finding ;
Closed be, then, the barren pages,
Let us keep our faith for ages.

FROGS.

TALK of romantic rambles,
Of moonlight walks and dreams !
The most romantic things on earth
Are the big frogs in the streams.

They sit upon some moss-grown stone,
Or on a grassy mound,
And, gravely as an Eastern sage,
Pour forth a croaking sound.

They are so charitable, too,
They give their concerts free ;
But always dive down in the mud
When men and boys they see.

They wear a coat of brilliant green,
And hose of brown or white ;
But if you try their dress to scan,
They swim clear out of sight.

They are an emigrating race :
If their home stream is low,
They marshal all their croaking tribes
And to another go.

In every pond and creek they dwell,
With music fill the air,
And keep their neighbors all awake
Till day dawns bright and fair.

They always have a noble choir,
That chant the unknown tongue ;
And if you ask them what they say,
They only answer, Ch-chung.

The little urchin, when he sees
Him seated on a log,
Is sure to pick a pebble up
And throw it at the frog.

When the sombre night is silent,
And earth would fain be still,
They raise a piercing riot with
Their voices loud and shrill.

Now, some epicures consider
Their flesh delicious food,
And, by the law of might o'er right,
Kill them because they're good.

Thus I conclude my ditty
About the pretty frog;
And when you see another, boys,
Don't knock him off a log.

PROSPECT PARK.

NATURE and art in fond outvying,
Smooth drives each other underlying,
Trees and flowers of all variety,
Blossoming and blooming without satiety,
Lakes and islands, and boats for rowing,
Hills and valleys in sunshine glowing,
Cottages, arbors, archways inviting;
God and man, their labors uniting,
Have formed of this Prospect Park a wonder,
Aglow with beauty above and under.

Half the Sabbath-day I sat there
In that rustic arbor,
Half the Sabbath-day I dreamed
The ship had entered harbor.

Half the day I whiled away
In framing my ideals :
In every liveried coach came they,
My darlings, my unrels,

And, bowling up, they gathered me
Unto ease and power,
Attending me so carefully
From all the ills that lower.

They floated 'mid the forest-trees,
'Neath the archways standing,
These angels of my imagery,
To save my ship from stranding.

At the Park I watched the ebbing,
Half a day, of human tide,
Musing, marveling, on the beauty,
Thinking heaven this side.

Now I leave my rustic bower,
Mounting on to higher ground,
See the old Atlantic Ocean,
See the vessels homeward bound :

Homeward bound ! my heart is breaking
With its weight of misery !
The ship that bore my lover out
Sleeps in the cold, cold sea.

Half a day, and half a life,
Is all that's left to me :
A broken heart, a broken life,
Is a sad legacy.

THE CROOKED CEDAR.

THEY bring me a cedar for Christmas,
A tree that has grown awry ;
I prune it and change its dimensions,
But 'twill not be straight or high.
It seems to have grown on a hill-side,
Swayed by each adverse wind,
Shadow of torrid and frigid zone
Pictured on cedar kind.
O winds ! why will ye blow so, and bend
The tender, fragile trees ?
Doctrinal winds ! why will ye blow,
And crook our souls like these ?
Thus in all God's great wide forest
So rare are perfect trees ;
We all are lopped by some strong wind,
Or bent by passing breeze.
When Christ's good Christmas comes on high,
Who'll bring a cedar, shapely, fair,
A soul exempt from bend or gnarl,
For the Christmas over there ?

STRUGGLING FOR A FOOTHOLD.

STRUGGLE, struggle bravely on !
It will come, a foothold strong.
Rest awhile your heart and feet,
Then press boldly up the steep,
Climbing on to higher ground
Until standing-room is found,
Far above the mist and chill
That dampen energy and will ;
Far above the mire and dust
That breathe despondency and rust.

Though the way be wearying long,
Unflinchingly press up, press on !
At the journey's end there'll lay
'Mid the stones a notch of clay
That your way-worn feet will fit,
And your life-lamp will be lit.
Basking in the brightness there,
You'll forget the toil and care,
And the struggling and the pain
Make your foothold greater gain.

“GONE UNDER.”

GONE under the current ! the popular tide
That angrily flashes from side to side ;
Wild waves financial ! how fitful your dash,
And round the unfortunate foamingly lash !

Could you, oh, would you
But rest for awhile !
Hold back your waters
Till fortune might smile ;

But sleep on the sand just a hand's-breadth away,
Sleep while he drew back his castle of clay ;
'Twas through inadvertence he reared it so near,—
Hush, waves ! a moment, till friends help to clear.

Could you, oh, would you
But rest for awhile !
Hold back your waters
Till fortune might smile.

Friends came up slowly, but waves rushed along,
The lull in their coming but loudened their song.
Wrecked is the castle, in ruins it lies,
But its strong containings the storm sanctifies.

Could you, oh, would you
But rest for awhile !
Hold back your waters
Till fortune might smile.

There beam in the distance true friends and tried,
Swayed not by depth of the pocket or tide,
Blossoming all helpful ; and kindly the way
Through the dim vista is opening to-day.

Could you, oh, would you
But rest for awhile !
Hold back your waters
Till fortune might smile.

Out of the wreck of that castle so fair
Rose stronger purpose to dare with more care ;
The builder, eschewing these foundings of sand,
Will rear him a temple on solid dry land.

And high tide may come,
False friendships outgo ;
Back from the waters,
He fears not their flow.

THE SUMMER RAIN.

PATTER and pelt upon the roof,
The rain and hail together
Are dancing, as they clatter out
The rhyme of summer weather.

Now a golden flash of lightning
The darkened sky is gashing !
And rumbling thunder fills the air,
Harsh clouds together clashing !

Rushing and crushing comes the gale
Of wind that is swept along,
After the thunder and lightning,
Like the chorus to a song.

And coquetting rain in dashes
Comes, for the fury's over,
Dancing with a gentler music
Into the blossoming clover ;

Into the thirsty flower-cups
The lawn and meadow gracing,
Out along the dusty highways
The waters now are racing.

Look ! look ! there's a brightness coming !
Hushed is the voice of thunder,
All dripping nature gazes up
Smiling with joy and wonder.

And the dark gray clouds are parted,
The sun in regal glory
Bursts through the darkness, that he may
Repeat the beautiful story ;

See it lined upon the sky !
God's promise of years ago,
Sending a thrill of love adown,
Arrows of light from the bow.

It comes like a benediction,
Breathing the spirit of prayer,
Calming nature, and whispering,
"The earth is under my care."

LANGUAGE.

THE first that falls from baby lips
Is Papa, Mamma : sweet it drips !
Sweeter than any other word
That by a parent heart is heard ;

And oft we woo the tender strain
From the baby over again,
For our longing love of sound,
And the joy in language found.

I oft have thought no joy so great
As watching by the opening gate
That's just ajar with little words,
For my glad chirping human birds :

To push it wider, have them say,
After mamma, in their own way,
" Dainty pet," and " darling child !"
Kiss my lips because I smiled,

And have their loving homage sweet
To round and crown my life complete.
Their faith so perfect in my good,
As though a white-winged angel stood

Supporting the maternal soul,
And giving sin the distant roll.
One feels their weakness, yet grows strong
In the dependence, and along

With the beloved babes up-climbs,
To hear the heavenly seraph chimes.
Language ! innate, immortal man
In early break of silence can

Feel upon him the sacred stamp,
Indelible through life's turmoil damp !
Indelible ! though as curling smoke
Yon engine on the stillness broke,

And, quickly hid in nether air,
Our sweetest words dissolve in care,
And faith, moth-eaten, lays away ;
But baby hearts are pure always,

And by the first sweet words they say
They gather up the broken lay
We in our childhood lost, and sing
Love's eager inquiries, to bring

Us back to trust in all divine,
To worship at the snowy shrine,
To love our God and language more,
Because the roses on our shore

At first are buds, and shed around
A freshness in no blown rose found ;
A sacred sweetness and a charm,
The echoing touch of Jesus' arm.

BURY ME AT SUNSET.

As the golden light is dying,
As the autumn winds are sighing
 O'er the lea,
As the flowers are twilight greeting,
Heaven and earth seem gently meeting,
 Bury me !

As you would a child when sleeping,
Lay me down, and be not weeping
 O'er the bier ;
As the twilight round you hover,
Let the earth my clay form cover,
 Check each tear.

Bury me when labor's ended,
And your thoughts to heaven are tended
 With the eve !
Bury me with fond affection ;
When you've time for sweet reflection,
 Do not grieve !

As the golden light is dying,
As the autumn winds are sighing
 O'er the lea,
As the flowers are twilight greeting,
Heaven and earth seem gently meeting,
 Bury me !

THAT OLD BEDSTEAD.

It's burning now, that old bedstead,
With crackling, rushing flame !
Shedding the firelight round the room
Like fickle flash of fame.
A bright red light's a moment there,
A flashing, glimmering beam :
Never a knob or post appears
When fire has ceased to gleam.
That old bedstead of sixty years
Is dead,—and yet we shed no tears.

If that old 'stead had tongue to tell
Of all it nursed to sleep,
The grief and gladness of its life
Since hewn from wildwood deep,
It would make a ponderous volume,
Bestrewn with mirth and woe,
Of those who slept in that bedstead
Old, of sixty years ago.
That old bedstead ! dear, ancient thing !
Around it shadowy visions cling.

Naught of its history I know,
None of its hidden lore ;
Stown in the garret for rubbish,
It slept on the darkened floor,

Till love's sunlight gleamed upon me ;
Then I married, you know,
And rummaged my new home over,
Laid the old bedstead low.
That old bedstead ! 'twas doubtless dear
To some who've gone from earthly cheer.

A conscious pang of grief I feel,
As flames in eager haste
Crackling rush at the old bedstead ;
'T may be treasure I waste !
But it's gone ! and the ashes lie
Soft as down on the hearth.
Those who slept in that bedstead old
Faded away from earth.
That old bedstead of sixty years
Sleeps in ashes of unshed tears.

“Earth to earth, ashes to ashes !”
This is the fate of all.
Bedsteads carry a weight of years ;
We list the angels call.
Other youth will our treasures burn !
The wood we value most
Will soon unto some careful bride
Seem but an old bed-post.
Earth to earth, ashes to ashes !
Youth to age in sunshine flashes.

MORNING.

SEE the dawning ! the awaking
Of the spirits of the deep !
See ! the golden day is breaking
Roseate from the arms of sleep !

Lifts her diamond-dripping sceptre
Over summer's blushing brow,
And what glory time has left her
Breaks and bursts in beauty now.

A MOTHER'S THOUGHT.

THERE are times it is hard to bear
The tender yoke of motherhood,
Fitting each thought to breathe of good
To the dear children, and to share

Constantly the sunshine with them,
When the heart is blocked with clouds,
And, slowly dying, hide the shrouds
And swell to joy grief's requiem.

Affection's halo fills the air !
Each little child has brought its load
Of love from off the angel road,
And rests it in the parent's care.

Richly garnered dew of heaven !
It lights the yoke, and no long grief
Can heavily press, where the relief
Of baby hands is given.

INTO THE SUMMER OF 1865.

THE war is o'er, the winter gone !
We bask in summer light,
And read the glory of the time
From nature's volume bright.

The flowers, with petals downy soft,
Are clad in rainbow hues,
And turn their tiny faces up
To catch the evening dews ;

Or, drooping low, they touch the earth,
Bowed by a weight of days,
Their leaves all browned, heeding not
Whither the dew-drop strays.

They are into the autumn, in
The noon of summer-time,
While other beauties wake to life
Our bowers to entwine.

So *we* are into the summer
 Speeding the days along,
Dreaming of loves and flowers, with
 Peace for our chorus song !

Peace God gives to our country
 After its warfare dire ;
Peace to the hearts all singed and burnt
 By purifying fire !

Peace unto us Americans ;
 Peace, if we worthy prove
Of the great boon that's granted us
 By His undying love.

And the breezes blow more lightly,
 The fields are brighter green,
The birds sing on more cheerily,
 The sun's a milder gleam !

Our hearts are tuned to music
 Of joy and summer-time,
It rippling murmurs in our lives
 Of that ethereal clime

Where all is peace and golden light,
 And angels fill the air ;
Never a care of earth can creep
 Into the summer there.

THE AGED.

EVERY silvery, shining hair,
Every furrow on the brow,
Each kind smile that lingers there,
Tells their days are numbered now :
Tells that time is going, going,
That their life-stream's flowing, flowing.

And we fondly love the aged,
Love to have them cross our way,
Love to give them every comfort
Ere they're borne from us away ;
Of joy have them drinking, drinking,
And of pleasure thinking, thinking.

They were young and blithe as we,
And we love to have them tell
Of the olden haunts and comrades
T' which they're bound by memory's spell ;
And as death comes nearer, nearer,
To our hearts they're dearer, dearer.

Time has o'er them showered her snow-flakes,
Grief her tears, and joy her dews ;
Kind experience lights them onward,
As each one his life reviews.
Evening winds are sighing, sighing,
Aged loved ones dying, dying.

WALTER UNDERGLEN.

THREE years we've dwelt together,
Three years of fleeting joy ;
I had outgrown my childhood,
He never was a boy !

At least his father said thus,
And how can I gainsay ?
I who had never seen him
On any young birthday ?

To me he seemed a gentleman,
This Walter Underglen ;
A round above, and different
From all other men.

He was my tutor often,
And taught me much of lore,
Of music, books, and nature,
I knew not of before,

He breathed the same old story,
That story sweet and old,
That stirs the hearts of all men
Since Adam crossed the wold.

He seemed to me so confident
I'd gladly be his wife,
My pride aroused, I answered
I'd prefer a single life !

Shunned, lest he should weary me
With importunity,
I left the dear old home, and sought
A new community.

He followed soon, and wrote me oft,
But never I replied ;
Because I felt I would not give
What I had once denied.

I traveled on for rest and ease
In Germany and France ;
I learned of the world's hollowness,
A little truth by chance.

Learned my heart was true and deep,
And did not suit the glare
Of fashion and coquetry
It practiced over there.

I came home lone and weary
To Walter with my love :
I found him *not* awaiting,
But mated to a dove,

A fair and fragile creature,
Whose young and sunny heart
Bounded quick to meet me,
Nor noted Walter's start.

I crushed my heart to bleeding,
Must fain dissemble on ;
I smiled and was the gayest
Of all the household throng.

The great white moon was shining
Its full of summer-time ;
Walter stood alone with me,
And said, Oh, Adaline !

He thought that I had wedded
A count of high estate,
And lived in pomp in Europe :
'Thus gossip sealed my fate !

Somehow he saw I loved him,
My Walter brave and strong !
We rambled on together,
Forgetful it was long ;

A bush of pearly snow-drops
Stood drooping in our route ;
We paused to gather clusters,
Of holiness devout.

They checked our wandering footsteps,
Those drops so snowy white,
Read us a silent lesson
Of purity and light.

'Twas not the Walter I had loved,
He was another's now !
I'd twine the snow-drops in a wreath
And bind them on my brow.

My lover was a distant myth,
A vision of the past.
I am happier now, I think,
With freedom at my mast.

Walter, a true and noble man,
His little Elma cheers ;
She knows not the sad mistake
That gave her him for years.

TO GRANDMA.

Two crutches bear thy weight, Grandma,
Two crutches slight and strong :
They are thy faithful oars, Grandma,
To row thy bark along.

Within the past short year, Grandma,
Thy sufferings have been great :
I would that God had given me
Power to alleviate !

Thy form was lithe and light, Grandma,
Thy limbs did service well :
It may be they had done enough ;
It may be,—who can tell ?

We must have our downfalls, Grandma,
Though some come late in life ;
But thou and I have learned, Grandma,
To look beyond this strife.

WE CANNOT.

WE cannot count the drops of rain
That come to fresh the earth again,
Or span the rainbow God has lain
Along the sky in lovely chain ;

Cannot number the blades of grass
Under our feet in velvet mass ;
Or see through our dim earthy glass
Half the glory we daily pass ;

Cannot measure the free pure air
Filled with life that is everywhere ;
Cannot fathom the love and care
Of God, who weighs a beggar's prayer ;

Or know why it should heavier be
Than gifts of our mock charity
We load on outward form so free
To fit us for eternity.

We cannot see, when color-blind,
Half the beauty He has defined,
Or feel the halo on mankind,
Unless we are of dross refined.

THE SPARROWS.

“OH, mamma, come quick!” he gasps,
With terror in voice and eyes :
The mother like a frightened
Fawn after his wee feet flies.

Out beneath the apple-trees,
Half hidden amid the grass,
Smiles her sunny baby’s face,
And the cloud doth lift and pass.

Elsie’s heart in anxious fear
Is sobbing the trouble out :
“Mamma, the wind blew down the
Nest, birds are scattered about !

“The old mother-bird can’t get
Them up : they are dead, all four.
Mamma, gather them up ; make
Them well as they were before !”

Four little sparrows and their
Nest under the apple-tree ;
The human mother lifted
Them up, oh, so tenderly !

To the nest the breathing two,
And she placed it on the tree,
To still the parent sparrow
Hearts that chirped their misery.

The prattling baby, laughing,
Clasped the two birds dead and still:
The trio sat on clovered
Turf to wait the sparrows' will;

They flew to their nest and found
But half their happy flock;
Then, flitting down below, they
Touched almost the baby's frock;

And dainty food was in the
Bill of one that nearest came:
"Oh, mamma, put them in the
Nest, they'll love them all the same."

The mother presses tearful
Face, from sunny lifts a kiss,
And lays the dead birds in the
Nest, the sparrows' grief and bliss.

FORGET THAT LOVE.

FORGET you ever loved me!
Banish that fleeting dream!
Think not that it must linger
The shadow it would seem.

Let sunshine gleam about you,
Dispelling each regret ;
You've all the friends around you
That loved you ere we met.

Waste not in vain repinings
The morning of your youth,
But let firm friendships gladden
Your heart of fervent truth.

If thoughts of me disturb you,
Oh, chase them from your mind !
For when I chatted with you,
'Twas friendship's wreath I twined.

Your dreams as mine I fancied,
Unconscious all the while
That deeper thought than kindness
Was lurking 'neath your smile.

Think not I was unfeeling
To slight each look and vow !
But go and love another !
Friends we were then, and now.

THE DEAD LETTER.

CONSIDERING it better,
I regret that letter
Which broke the fetter
Whose bond was sweet.

I wrote with vexation,
With condemnation,
Forgetting my station,
And thought discreet.

And now, believe me,
'Twould sorely grieve me
To have her leave me
Out of her heart.

Yet I have told her
I would not hold her
To promise, but colder
Be, and apart.

Now I am fretting
With vain regretting:
The sun is setting
'Gainst bars of fate.

Oh, had I not spoken,
Or given a token
That faith was broken,
How I could wait !

Wait for a beaming,
A fond love gleaming,
That I'd been dreaming
Of with her hand.

Her heart seemed divided,
Her love undecided,
As slight finger glided
Into gold band.

Then her coquetting
Seemed a regretting
Girlhood was getting
 Daily more brief;

So, though her flirting
Was not deeply hurting
The life it was girting,
 'Twas a relief

Fair freedom to proffer,
And generously offer
The dandy whose coffer
 Is full of gold,

But empty of brains
And goodly contains,
The chance that remains
 Of being more bold.

But now I repent it,
Grieve that I sent it.
My heart never meant it,
 Della Forsha !

What is 't you're bringing,
Waiter, and flinging,
Nor ceasing your singing?
 Letter, you say !

I haste to receive it.
Would you believe it?
I can reprieve it:
 That letter's dead.

Uncle Sam, magician !
My good physician !
Joy ! joy ! Elysian !
Not read, but dead !

ICTODES FÆTIDUS.

A PARODY.

EXPANSIVE green herb, inhabiting the shadows,
Or blooming on the mere,
Or where the frogs and turtles of the meadows
Shrink from the hidden weir !

Thou laughest at the fish, and at their worry
Because the stream is low,
And from the loaming depth they cannot hurry,
But flap about the slough.

Born to the largeness, born to the verdant incense,
Thou need'st not speak or spin,
For the whole air is laden with thy presence,
Along the pond and lin.

The summer wind against thy outspread awning
Plays dalliance with the sun,
And the rude tussocks are thy footmen warning
When low the waters run.

The dragon-fly, thine holiday attendant,
Leaves serpent in the field,
And o'er thy heavy foliage is pendent
With bayonet and shield.

Thou art the cabbage, green among the greenest,
All armed with umbrellas,
And, hoisting them above thy manor, seemest
To distrust thy fellows.

Thou art the sluggard, haunting laggard rivers,
To drink their brightest dreams,
Creeping and thirsting till the stream delivers
Thee all its silver gleams.

O cabbage of swamp, be still, and let the glory
Rest on thy head no more!
Sink into oblivion with this story,
And never shroud the shore.

OLD AND NEW.

WHENEVER the new excels the old,
Let us quaff from her silvered cup;
But till we are sure her draught is best,
Let us not give the old drinks up.

Though great be the charm in fresh and new,
The staunch and tried are more to me :
I would not forsake a friend that's true
For all the diamond depth of sea.

And I would not give the dear years past
For all the new bloom of to-day :
The sun-blown grass about our feet is
Not more sweet than the garnered hay.

THE HAIR THEY WEAR.

WHOSE hair do you wear, my sister fair?
Said I, with a nonchalance tender,
While taking a sup from my coffee-cup
(I'd not for the world offend her).
But where is the use of this abuse
Heaped on the brain's frail casket?
Of making a muff of curl and puff?
The warmth of head don't ask it.
Behind and before, up higher and more,
This stack of wool is extended,
Until, I declare, I don't know where
Is the hair that nature intended
For framing the face, and cranium's grace,
Unless underneath it be hidden ;
Far under the mop, lest if it lop
From its binding, and fall unbidden,

It be so astray that the world to-day
To see that it grew be astonished :
Each little bird I lately have heard
Go back to its leaf-home admonished,
For often, of late, I hear the birds prate,
Lamenting their nests that are missing ;
With covetous eye they're peeping so sly
At head of the sister I'm kissing.
Ridie, I know the wrens want you ! so
I would spare them part of this crowning !
The upholsterer, too, is looking us through,
On your lavishing hair he is frowning.
So have a great care, my lady ! beware !
Lest they talon you off in their clutches !
Don't fasten it tight, when in their sight :
They fancy these exquisite touches !
Now don't look so cross ! 'twould be a loss
If you'd go with the stuff, I aver.
Be sure it has cost ! but money is lost
Where its loss we could daily deter.
Rude danger's prow is shadowing your brow
In this wild profusion, my fairy !
I solemnly vow, there's a vulture now
That will pounce on it for an eyrie !
I could not endure the hornets, I'm sure,
That follow this bamboozle after !
They'll certainly sting ! look how they cling !
Ugh ! they're waking up at your laughter !
A vision I see, most fearful to me !
I would I were hibernated,
Till good new time like the old shall shine,
When never a head is inflated.

GOOD-BY.

Now it comes, the hour of parting,
Coming with the waning day !
Friend from friend in love departing
Hies to happy home away.
Good-by, good-by, good-by !
Oh, why, oh, why, oh, why
Was the bitter word good-by
E'er coined beneath the sky ?

Warm and glad the clasp of greeting,
Bright with joy the features glow ;
But when friend from friend's retreating,
Then the grasp is lingering, slow.
Good-by, good-by, good-by !
Oh, why, oh, why, oh, why
Was the bitter word good-by
E'er coined beneath the sky ?

'Tis beneath, but not above it,
Thank the Lord, whose grace is free ;
And His promise, how we love it !
Of the greetings glad to be.
On high, on high, on high
There comes no sad good-by ;
And, as we upward fly,
Serene will be our sky.



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